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**BONAPARTE :**  
**GOVERNOR OF EGYPT**



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PROFILE OF BONAPARTE

*By Dutertre*

*Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*

# BONAPARTE : GOVERNOR OF EGYPT

*by*

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

E. W. DICKES

WITH 16 PLATES AND 2 MAPS



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## ERRATA

Page 26, line 24 : *for* Napoleon *read* Bonaparte.

Page 93, line 13 : *for* putting on *read* wearing.

Page 93, line 18 : *for* had him installed at Cairo by  
*read* showed the installation at Cairo of

Page 146, line 7 from end : *for* Dutetre *read* Dutertre.

Page 210, line 4 : *for* physicist *read* physician.

Pages 260, line 11, and 261, line 11 : *for* Davout *read*  
Davoust.

Page 276, line 4 : *for* kissoueh *read* kiswa.

Page 295, line 10 : *for* Fugière *read* Fugières.

Page 317, line 7 from end : *for* consilium *read* concilium.



# I

## *COLONIZING AIM AND CIVILIAN COLLABORATION*

THE EGYPTIAN expedition was France's first contact as a colonizing power with North African Islam. It is to this expedition that we must look when seeking the origins of what has since been called France's Mussulman or native policy.

On 11 and 12 Ventôse of the year VI (March 1st and 2nd, 1798), the Executive Directory of the French Republic held two sittings, as to the purpose of which the official reports maintain absolute silence. At these sittings it decided to defer a scheme for an attack on the English coast, and to undertake an expedition to Egypt, the command of which was entrusted to General Bonaparte.

This sudden resolve gave effect at last to a plan which had long been in existence, and had frequently been brought up for consideration in the preceding twenty years, both under the Monarchy and under the Republic. It was to be not only a warlike operation, a vast strategic manœuvre, but also a political and economic enterprise, an actual plan for the establishment of a colonial possession. The Directory can have had no more than a very imperfect knowledge of the distant origins and the numerous manifestations of the idea which it made its own ; but the plan was appropriated in its entirety, as received from past generations.

The plan had reached the Directory through a memorandum of Talleyrand's. That statesman had had knowledge of the principal papers concerning the scheme for the conquest of Egypt. His memorandum had been directly



inspired by the proposals he had had before him or of which he had a recollection<sup>1</sup>; it represented the aim of the Egyptian expedition as the foundation of a colony, for the common benefit of the colonizing people and the country colonized: 'Egypt was a province of the Roman Republic; it must become a province of the French Republic. Rome's conquest belonged to the period of the decay of that great country; France's will belong to the period of her prosperity. The Romans robbed Egypt of kings illustrious in the arts and sciences, etc.; the French will rid her of the most atrocious tyrants who have ever existed.' They would also restore the prosperity of Egypt's agriculture, industry, and commerce; they would open up the ancient Suez route once more for trade between Europe and India, and would thus effect a veritable revolution in the economic life of the Western peoples; and, finally, they would provide France with compensation for the loss, inevitable sooner or later, of her American colonies. To make Egypt a French dependency; to restore the cradle of civilization; to bring back prosperity to the country and destroy a barbarous tyranny—such were the purposes of the Egyptian expedition as defined in the document submitted to and discussed by the Directory.

After the evacuation Fourier, one of Bonaparte's civilian collaborators, wrote the historical preface to the admirable *Description de l'Egypte*,<sup>2</sup> which would in itself have sufficed to immortalize the memory of the French expedition; and he described the enterprise with which he had been associated in the same terms of colonization, economic renovation, and civilizing work. In addition to the political motives which led to the decision to undertake it—to strike a blow at England, and to punish the Mameluke beys for their vexatious measures against French traders—there was, says Fourier, 'the consideration of the advantages promised by a permanent occupation.' France

<sup>1</sup> Particularly a well documented report submitted to him a few days before by Magallon, French Consul General in Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> The publication of the *Description de l'Egypte* was begun in 1809 and finished in 1825. The first edition comprises nine folio volumes of text and 14 volumes of plates, maps, plans, and engravings.

would derive these advantages from the crops already raised in Egypt, wheat and other cereals, rice, and fruit of all sorts ; and from the more remunerative crops—sugar cane, flax, and the indigo plant—which would be made possible by a better utilization of the waters of the Nile. She would derive advantages from the export from Egypt of the products that country drew from abroad, coffee and perfumes from Arabia, gold dust, ivory, and other articles of African origin, and merchandise from the Indies ; and from the import into Egypt of products the country lacked, which could be furnished by French industries—fabrics, woollens, wines, iron, lead, timber, etc. The rational exploitation of these multiple resources would necessitate public works which would add to the wealth of the country—irrigation works for agriculture ; and, for the benefit of trade, a navigable canal to connect the Mediterranean with the Red Sea. Commercial relations would be developed or established with Arabia, Persia, Hindustan, and Africa. The continent of Africa would be opened to exploration. Restored to prosperity and regenerated by a wise and enlightened government, Egypt would radiate benefits on all the surrounding countries.

The preparations for the expedition were begun at once and pushed on with indefatigable energy by Bonaparte. Its destination was kept entirely secret, but its complex character—both civil and military, both scientific and colonial—was revealed and defined at once. In order to carry out the economic programme sketched by Talleyrand in his memorandum, it was necessary to engage persons with technical knowledge of a sort that could not be possessed by the army officers, who in any case would be kept fully occupied by the exigencies of the campaign. There was, moreover, one more purpose besides those indicated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, a purpose of an order yet more exalted and more disinterested.

The past greatness of Egypt, the glamour of her ancient civilization, the artistic value and historic interest of the monuments that preserved its memory, were matters which

had already stirred Bonaparte's imagination. They had their part in the attraction exerted over him by the Nile valley ; he saw in them ■ means of heightening by discoveries useful to art and science the glory of a conquest of which he fully appreciated the political importance, a conquest of which he had dreamed like Talleyrand, and which he had suggested as his Italian campaign drew to an end. Since that campaign had started, the idea of making war serve to enrich the artistic and scientific patrimony of France had begun in a modest way to be put into practice, through the institution of a Science and Arts Commission, of which Monge was a member. While engaged in Italy in the collection of objects intended to grace the Paris museums, Monge had certainly been taken into Bonaparte's confidence with regard to his first ideas of an Egyptian campaign ; he may have helped to turn the general's thoughts in that direction, and he was invited by Bonaparte to furnish him with information concerning the country : it may be supposed that his erudition confirmed Bonaparte in the idea that there were artistic treasures to be discovered on the banks of the Nile and big tasks to be accomplished there.

On the conclusion of peace in Italy, Monge had gone to Paris, charged, along with Berthier, with the transmission of the treaty of Campo Formio for ratification by the Directory. He was still there when, on December 5th, 1797, the victor of Arcole and Rivoli returned in triumph to his little house in the Rue Chantierine, which soon afterwards was renamed Rue de la Victoire ; and he took his place, with Berthollet, Laplace, and Lagrange, among the scientists with whom the young general surrounded himself at that period, for the discussion of mathematics, physics, and chemistry. A short time afterwards the Academy of Sciences welcomed Bonaparte among its members ; he was elected in the vacancy caused by Carnot's exile. Very sensible of the honour, he proceeded to take his seat at the meetings of the Academy, dressed in the Academician's uniform designed by David. We soon find him placing his title of 'Member of the

National Institute'<sup>1</sup> after his signature, and before '*Général en Chef*,' on his decrees, a clear indication of the value he attached to the right he had acquired of being numbered among the men of science.

Thus it was that, once the expedition to Egypt had been decided on, Bonaparte was led to assign it an artistic and scientific purpose, and to attach to the army a Science and Arts Commission, on which every sort of specialist was placed. What was the Commission's task? First of all, undoubtedly, to come to the aid of the army, to bring science to the service of the war and the government, and to assist in the organization and the administration of the conquered country; but also, as was said by one of its members, Jomard, 'to bring the arts of Europe to a semi-barbarous, semi-civilized people, destitute of industry and of scientific enlightenment'; and, finally, to reveal to Europe Egypt past and contemporary, the Egypt of the Pharaohs, the Greeks, and the Mamelukes.

A decree of the Directory dated 26 Ventôse of the year VI (March 16th, 1798) instructed the Minister of the Interior to 'place at General Bonaparte's disposal the engineers, artists, and other subordinates of his Ministry, together with such material as 'the general might demand for the service of the expedition of which he was in charge. Bonaparte, at whose request this order had been issued, had not waited for the completion of that formality before choosing and enrolling the heads of his scientific general staff. Monge had already been appointed and set to work. He had left for Rome some time before, with instructions from the general to take from the Vatican the Greek, Arabic, and Syriac printing machinery of the '*Propaganda*' (the *Congregatio de propaganda Fide*), with the presses, the type, and the workmen, and with such maps, books, and documents relating to Egypt as might be discoverable. Shortly after this he was reminded of a desire his imperious friend had already expressed to him. On 25 Ventôse (March 15th),

<sup>1</sup> The Academy of Sciences was grouped with four others by the Revolutionary government in the National Institute—Translator's note.

shortly before the Directory signed at Paris the birth certificate of the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts*, Monge wrote to Bonaparte from Rome to try to turn him from his friendly insistence on sending him to Egypt :

‘ You are determined, my dear General, that I shall have adventures in spite of my age. If I were younger, no proposal would be more pleasing to me than that I should serve under your orders and contribute to the utmost extent of my poor capacity to the good you wish to do to our country and to the whole world. But I am needed at Paris for a thing that I can do and no one else can ; I should be leaving at Paris a wife who is no longer young, whom I have no right to make unhappy, and for whom hope, which enables so many evils to be borne, can no longer have any charms. Leave me among the mortals, to admire your talents, appreciate your services, and hymn your glory.’

But it had already become no easy matter to resist Bonaparte, and could Monge, who had been his first confidant in regard to his Egyptian projects, refuse to follow him thither ? After a little hesitation he had to promise the general that he would go—Bonaparte had threatened that he would return up the Tiber to fetch him !

Berthollet, who was inseparable from Monge and, like him, a constant visitor to the Rue Chantereine, had also been one of the first to be chosen by Bonaparte, who had known him and appreciated his qualities in Italy, and had taken lessons in chemistry from him. Berthollet had become famous through his work on chlorine, ammonia, and dyes. He had brought his science, as had his colleague Monge, to the service of the national defence during the revolutionary wars ; while Monge was installing cannon foundries and writing a treatise on the art of manufacturing these engines of war, Berthollet had been discovering new explosives and directing the manufacture of gunpowder. His services and his abilities marked him out for participation in the expedition under preparation.

Berthollet and Monge thus formed the nucleus of the future Commission. Around them there was rapidly assembled an incomparable phalanx of civil engineers,

architects, mechanical engineers, scientists of every sort, artists, writers, and printers. The recruitment was begun as soon as the Directory had given its approval to Bonaparte's scheme, and was carried out under his direction as *général en chef*, partly by him directly and partly by those first appointed. Berthollet was in charge of the enrolment of part of the experts; General Caffarelli du Falga, of the Engineers, who was to be at the head of the Commission, was placed in charge of the arrangements for examining the qualifications of candidates.

One of the first members chosen, Fourier, a famous mathematician, professor at the École Polytechnique, undertook the recruitment, from among his colleagues and past and present pupils, of a corps of civil engineers. The news soon spread that the government wanted technicians to join ■ distant expedition, the destination of which remained a mystery, and candidates presented themselves spontaneously. Among them were E. de Villiers du Terrage and his friend Du Bois Aymé, both pupils of the Polytechnique. Most of the other great state establishments, the École Centrale, the École Normale, the École des Mines, the Ponts et Chaussées (School of Civil Engineering), the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers (School of Arts and Crafts), the balloon park at Meudon, the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, and the Observatoire, were also called upon to furnish their contingent. It was no doubt at Bonaparte's own instigation that the aid was requested of the illustrious mineralogist Dolomieu; he was tired of the adventures of a life already fairly full of incident, and only agreed to go because the expedition, the secret of which was either revealed to him or discovered by him, would give him the opportunity of verifying on the spot the conclusions arrived at in a memorandum he had published in 1793 on the formation of the Nile Delta. Berthollet went personally to the Jardin des Plantes in search of naturalists. 'Come with us,' he said to two of the youngest professors, Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 'Monge and I will be your companions and Bonaparte will be your general.' Cuvier, to his regret, was unable to go, but Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire agreed.

## ■ *Bonaparte : Governor of Egypt*

On 6 Germinal (March 26th) Bonaparte, pushing on simultaneously with both parts of his task, the military and the civil, sent a request to the Ministry of the Interior that a certain number of specialists, whose co-operation had been arranged or was anticipated, should hold themselves ready to leave for various imaginary destinations—some for Bordeaux, others for Flushing, and so on. These were : citizens Dangos and Lachapelle, astronomers ; Costaz, Fourier, Monge, and Mollard, mathematicians ; Conté, head of the balloon brigade ; Thouin, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and Delile, naturalists ; Dolomieu, mineralogist ; Berthollet, chemist ; Dupuis, antiquary ; Isnard, Le Père, Gratien Le Père, Lancret, and Lefebvre, civil engineers ; Chézy, orientalist, and Panhuzen, interpreter.

This first list underwent certain modifications and additions, no doubt in agreement with Bonaparte, at the hands of the Minister of the Interior, Letourneur. On 13 Germinal (April 2nd) Letourneur submitted to the Directory the names of the experts selected by the general "for employment on a special mission," and those of the engineers and pupils of the School of Civil Engineering selected "to go to Flushing." The new list had these additions : Nouet, astronomer ; Clouet and Richer, mechanical engineers ; Milbert, mineralogist ; Descotils, Samuel Bernard, and Regnault, chemists ; Badard, engineer, and Fèvre, pupil of the School of Civil Engineering. The names of Lefebvre and Chézy were omitted.

Not all of these first recruits actually served on the Commission : Clouet, Richer, Dangos, Lachapelle, Mollard, Isnard and Thouin did not join it. On the other hand, a considerable number of fresh recruits were added. The example of the first enrolments brought further candidatures ; their propaganda determined in others the choice of their profession ; each member appointed became a sort of recruiting agent ; and the leaders chose their subordinates. Thus the brigade from the Polytechnique, formed by Fourier, ultimately included 45 members—pupils, past pupils, teachers or professors. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire induced Savigny, who had returned from China, Nectoux, who arrived from San

Domingo, and the flower painter Redouté to join the group of naturalists. The Observatoire sent another astronomer, Quesnot, and pupil, Méchain. All the ordnance survey officers and civil engineers serving with the army in Italy received orders to proceed to Genoa, to embark there with the troops under General Baraguay-d'Hilliers; at the head of the former was Chief Survey Officer Jacotin. Bonaparte found the director of the Imprimerie Nationale an unwilling helper, and requested Letourneur to reprimand him; this state printing department was called on to supply the material necessary for two printing establishments, one for Greek and one for Arabic, and a whole staff, composed of an assistant overseer, three readers, and 18 printers and compositors, under the direction of the orientalist Marcel—in place of Langlès, who was unwilling to go. The staff and supplies were described in the order addressed to the Minister concerned as intended for the 'ex-Venetian islands.'

Application was made to the School of Oriental Languages and to the corps of interpreters for orientalists and Arabic scholars, one of whom was Venture de Paradis, one of the best agents of the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Artists like Vivant-Denon, whose passion for art had never excluded a taste for adventure, asked to be allowed to join the expedition. Bonaparte's desire was that every branch of knowledge that could be useful to the scientific, artistic, and literary work of the Commission should be represented on it. He went further: he wanted it to offer to the army, and to the colony he proposed to found, all the resources that add charm and embellishment to life. He would have liked to take the poet Delille, the composer Méhul, and the singer Loys. Delille was too old, Méhul too stay-at-home, and Loys was afraid of catching cold; in their place Bonaparte had at all events Parseval-Grandmaison, Rigel, and Villoteau, Loys' understudy at the Opera. The academician Arnault, who was to stop at Malta, made up ■ little for any inadequacies of Parseval as a representative of literature.

By the time when, in view of the approach of the date for



sailing and the numbers enrolled, the Government decided to close the lists, the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* had no less than 187 members, military and civil. Twenty of them did not sail, leaving a total of 167, the number given by Estève, the army paymaster general, in a statement drawn up during the passage from Toulon to Malta.<sup>1</sup> Two more, Arnault and Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, left the expedition at Malta, so that the Commission actually at work in Egypt numbered 165 persons.

As they were enrolled, the members of the Commission were divided into classes corresponding to their special branch and the services the general-in-chief expected from them—astronomers, mathematicians, chemists and physicists, mechanical and constructional engineers, civil engineers, ordnance survey officers, architects, zoologists, artists and composers, men of letters, economists and antiquaries, orientalists, printers; finally, surgeons, physicians, and pharmacists.

Never before had an army setting out to conquer a country taken with it a living encyclopædia of this sort. The membership of the Commission presented a summary of everything useful or decorative that an advanced civilization could produce; it constituted the embryo not only of an administration but of a veritable school of material and moral progress. We have already given the names of some of the members—illustrious men brought away from the Académie des Sciences, from the professorial chairs of the great special schools, and from the direction of state establishments, to accompany Bonaparte to Egypt. Alongside them there were many who were then at the outset of the careers they had embraced, or even still preparing for them; but they had been well chosen: several of them became

<sup>1</sup> The statement ran as follows: 'Scientists, artists, etc., 167: 21 mathematicians, 3 astronomers, 15 naturalists and mining engineers, 17 civil engineers, 15 ordnance survey officers, 4 architects, 3 pupils in constructional engineering, 8 draughtsmen, 1 sculptor, 10 engineering draughtsmen, 3 gunpowder experts, 10 men of letters and secretaries, 15 consuls and interpreters, 9 health officers, 9 quarantine officers, 22 printers, 2 musicians.'

famous, and most of them reached the top of their profession. Many future chief engineers and inspectors-general were among them, many future professors, members of the Institut de France, of the Académie des Sciences, of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, even of the Académie Française. 'We shall have with us a third of the Institute,' wrote Bonaparte to Monge. At the time the statement was something of an exaggeration; but Bonaparte might well have said that he was setting out with a third of the Institute of the future.

At the time the majority of these learned personages were young men. They were setting out under the orders of a general aged twenty-nine, and many were younger still. Villiers du Terrage and Duchanoy were seventeen; Du Bois Aymé, nineteen; Jomard, twenty-one; Jollois and Lancret, twenty-two; Malus and Ripault, twenty-three; Descotils, twenty-five; Saint-Genis, twenty-six. Nouet, the oldest member but one, was only approaching the sixties; Berthollet and Monge were fifty and fifty-two. The patriarch of the company was the orientalist Venture de Paradis, already in the sixties. Young and old were animated by the same devotion to their country and to science. Their qualifications have been indicated; something should be said of their spirit. Though most of them were ignorant of their destination, they all set out full of confidence and enthusiasm. 'We had no idea,' wrote Du Bois Aymé later, 'where Bonaparte was going to lead us. But what did we care! This celebrated warrior inspired at that time a noble enthusiasm and a blind confidence. Monge, Berthollet, Caffarelli, Dolomieu were going with him and were good enough to associate us with their labours. Could we hesitate an instant?' Although isolated in Italy, and, what was worse, taken severely to task by his wife, who called him an 'old lunatic,' Monge himself appreciated in the end the distinction of being associated in the enterprise, of which he defined the purpose in high-flown terms in a letter to Bonaparte:

'So, here am I transformed into an Argonaut. It is one of the miracles of our new Jason, who is not ploughing the

seas for the conquest of a Fleece of which the material cannot greatly increase in value, but is carrying the torch of reason into a country where its light has not penetrated for a very long period, is extending the domain of philosophy, and is carrying into more distant fields the national glory.'

Monge was still at Rome; he only left to embark at Civita Vecchia with some of the troops of the expedition. He had done his best to cope with Bonaparte's repeated requests for printing material and staffs, books, maps, and interpreters. On 25 Ventôse (March 15th) he announced that he was going to take from the Propaganda three presses, with all the appliances and material necessary for their working, and that he was taking with them Latin, Arabic, and Syriac type. He expected to secure some overseers, though not as many as Bonaparte wanted, and was trying to get interpreters. On the other hand, he had no maps or information of any sort; he had searched the Propaganda library and the Vatican engraving studios in vain. In the former he had found only old and out-of-date books, and in the latter a poor atlas in which the map of Africa was lacking or incomplete. Monge accordingly recommended that only the resources of Paris should be counted on for books and documents, and that several copies should be secured there of each of the works which Bonaparte and he had had at Passeriano: Sulkowski, the A.D.C., would have a list.

As for interpreters, Monge wrote that he would not be able to engage many, and none would be first-rate: few of them could read and write. He had been recommended a *penitenziere* (high confessor, for special cases) of St. Peter's, but had been unable to approach him; 'I am obliged,' he wrote, 'to lay siege to him, and I am digging a trench at a distance; I hope to carry him off.' Finally, on 15 Germinal (April 4th), the printing machinery was packed and four interpreters were ready to leave. On the 28th (April 17th) Monge, Fairpoult, Daunou, and Florent, as Commissioners of the Directory, drew up a memorandum determining the composition and salaries of the staff of the oriental printing establishment, including an interpreter, two overseers,

three compositors, and three printers. The interpreter was from Diarbekir, and one of the overseers from Damascus.

Bonaparte had been at pains to make good from his own resources the lack of books and maps from the Vatican reported by Monge. He had himself charged his secretary, Bourienne, with the task of forming for him a small camp library of 18mo volumes, comprising sixty works, of which he gave Bourienne a list. It may be that this list formed the nucleus of the much more considerable library which General Caffarelli was commissioned to collect. To aid him in the task, Caffarelli turned to the economist Jean-Baptiste Say, who guided his choice and helped him in the buying of the works, to the number of about 500. The *Encyclopédie*, the collection of transactions of the Académie des Sciences, the works of Voltaire, manuals of the military art and of military history, volumes of history and geography, travellers' records, notably those of Savary and Volney; the works of the leading men of letters, and many technical works on medicine, surgery, architecture, and civil engineering—these formed, so to say, the intellectual baggage of the expedition. To these must be added seven copies of the series of maps by the geographer D'Anville, relating not only to Egypt but to the regions into which the army might be led to extend its operations: eastern Europe, the coasts of Greece and the Archipelago, Asia, Palestine, India, the Gulf of Arabia, Phœnicia, the Caspian Sea, and Africa. A sum of 25,329 *livres* (francs) had been devoted to the formation of this library.

This was but a part of the task confided to Caffarelli. In one of his letters to Bonaparte, Monge had advised him to buy two or three good theodolites, and to get them through Prony. This advice had been forestalled by the general-in-chief, who had, indeed, gone much further: he had already charged Caffarelli with the purchase, at the same time as the books, of all the instruments of which the Commission might have need—astronomical, physical, chemical, topographical instruments; ballooning material and accessories, naturalists' requisites, surgical and pharmaceutical requisites, printing supplies, and machines and tools

of various sorts. Caffarelli's expenditure on these purchases, including the library and the expenses of packing and transport and office expenses, reached the sum of 215,509 *livres*. Each class of the Commission was assigned a complete stock of the instruments it needed—astronomical clock and telescope for the astronomers; compasses, declinators and levels for the topographers; air-pumps, electrical machines, barometers, thermometers, and hygrometers for the physicists, and so on; the surgeons were to have all they required for amputations and trepanning operations, for operating cataract, for lithotomy, etc. Dismounted and packed, an observatory, a physical laboratory, a chemical laboratory, a topographical equipment, a naturalist's equipment, an aeronautical installation, a pharmacy, a hospital, and a printing works were to be embarked with the army.

Toward the end of Germinal (the middle of April), the Commission had been constituted on paper and provided with its scientific supplies, and Bonaparte gave the order for the start. All the experts, artists, workmen, engineer officers, and others, most of them in Paris, some in the provinces, awaiting departure, as they thought, for Flushing or Bordeaux, were requested by Caffarelli to go to Lyons, where they were to arrive by 4 Floréal (April 23rd). Their orders informed them that the destination of their journey was Rome. Berthier, the chief of staff, would give them their passports, and Caffarelli would precede them to Lyons. An officer of engineers would there hire a diligence, a barge, or a boat to take them to Avignon. They were to be at Toulon by the evening of 8 Floréal; Caffarelli would have lodgings prepared for them there.

The voyage was performed in accordance with this programme, which had been drawn up by Bonaparte. The odyssey of this great army of scholars began along the roads of France and the waters of the Rhone, in prosaic diligences and on slow-going barges towed down stream, like a pleasure party. The young of the party gave vent to their high spirits, careless of the morrow. Those of them who were fresh from school began their discoveries with that of



POUSSIELOUE, ADMINISTRATOR  
FINANCES

*By Duton*



E     ATHEMATICIAN FOURIER



France, sometimes sarcastic and serious, sometimes amused by the life of country road or village street, the sights, the customs, or the discomforts of the provinces, sometimes taking an interest in monuments or Roman antiquities or natural beauties, or, even like Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, in schools and collections and industries. The unexpected or unfamiliar elements in meals and lodgings were just enough to give the journey the element of fun that is the charm of travelling.

The purpose of the expedition had been foreseen from the start, and alarmed nobody, and the doubt about its duration troubled very few; the calmness of the leaders of the Commission was reassuring. On arrival at Toulon, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire learned from Kléber that 'we are going to the Indies,' and this prospect does not seem to have been found excessively alarming, any more than that of the 'burning sands of Egypt.' 'Everybody has assembled here' (at Toulon), 'and our colony of experts is in the best of spirits,' wrote Bonaparte to Monge on 21 Floréal (May 10). Embarkation began at once. The members of the Commission were distributed among various ships of the squadron; the most notable among them, like Berthollet and Arnault, on board the flagship *L'Orient*, and the others on board vessels of more modest rank. Contact was then established between the civilians, who up to then had been a separate and homogeneous group, and the soldiers with whom they were to live. There were difficulties of adjustment which did some injury to the feelings of the civilians. An order issued by Caffarelli at Bonaparte's suggestion had divided the members of the Commission, in accordance with their standing in France, into five classes, corresponding for purposes of treatment to various ranks of the military hierarchy. Those included in the first class were assimilated to the officers of highest rank, and so on. The general-in-chief had hoped in this way to prevent disputes between the military and civil elements over precedence and treatment on board. But he had reckoned without his officers' pride and prejudices and suspicion of these intruders in frock coats and top hats, these 'Pekinese' (civilians). Without excep-



tion the experts were badly received on board ; some of the most illustrious among them had a bitter struggle to get their cabins and berths. Most of them were looked at askance by the army officers, even by some of the generals in Bonaparte's immediate entourage, who made no bones about giving open expression to their disgust. This unhappy state of affairs lasted throughout the voyage. Caffarelli du Falga himself, the officer in command of the Commission, made a point of showing open favouritism toward the military officers. The courtesy and consideration lavished by Bonaparte on board the *Orient* on the scientists who were sailing with him only added to the jealousy of the majority of the officers and the contempt with which they treated the 'pen-pushers.' Junot yawned at discussions into which the general-in-chief brought Berthollet, Venture, Arnault, Desgenettes, and Larrey, and he proposed that Lannes should be admitted to the Commission on account of his name. Lannes might have imagined himself safe from this insult<sup>1</sup>—after he had expressed his regret that he could not have Arnault thrown overboard by fifty grenadiers ! It is true that not all the officers distinguished themselves in this way ; more than one of them made it a point of honour to give a cordial welcome to their civil colleagues. General Reynier showered attentions on Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and succeeded in imparting to all his subordinates his deference and liking for the young savant. But on the whole the first contact between the civil and military elements was the reverse of cordial. It took a long time for the military officers to grow out of their antipathy.

Let us leave scholars and soldiers making their way to Malta and on to Alexandria, and devote one more moment to the scientific preparations for the expedition. They were a small matter in comparison with the enormous military and naval preparations which had been carried on simultaneously ; but they represented a considerable effort, and produced a result unique in history : the setting up of a body such as no other expeditionary corps has ever had at its disposal. If it is true that the function creates

<sup>1</sup> *L'âne*—' ass.'—Trans.

the organ, the instrument created may serve to measure the task for which it was intended.

While the expedition was being organized, but more than a month after the scientific and military preparations had been begun, the Directory had decided to lay down in a decree, which was still kept entirely secret, the purpose of the enterprise entrusted to Bonaparte. The general-in-chief of the army of the Orient, said article 3 of this decree, 'will cut the isthmus of Suez and will take all necessary measures to assure the unfettered possession of the Red Sea to the French Republic'; and in the succeeding article we read: 'He will use all the means in his power to improve the lot of the natives of Egypt.' Thus was indicated, with precision on one point but in general terms on all the rest, the political and civil task in which the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* was to collaborate.

## II

### FIRST CONTACT WITH EGYPT

EVEN HAD it been an ordinary military operation, free from any purpose of establishing a colony, policy would have had its part to play in the Egyptian campaign, in order to render it less lethal. How much more important was the political element when the intention was to remain in the conquered country, to perform administrative, economic, and scientific work there, and to undertake the cutting of the isthmus of Suez ! Before embarking, Bonaparte had determined the broad lines of a policy inspired by the particular situation of Egypt.

For the situation of Egypt was already 'particular,' different *de facto* from what it was *de jure*. At law, Egypt was simply a province of the Turkish empire ; in actual fact it was an autonomous territory, governed by usurpers. The government which had been substituted for that of the sultan was not even autochthonous, but entirely foreign : it was carried on by a military force recruited principally in Albania and Circassia. Egypt was in reality ■ possession of the Mamelukes and their beys, who had subjugated the natives, relegated the pasha to the citadel of Cairo, and reduced their own obligations toward the Porte to the payment of a tribute very irregularly remitted.

In 1798 the sovereign authority was in the hands of two of the Mameluke beys, Murad and Ibrahim ; Murad was in command in Lower Egypt and Cairo, and Ibrahim in Upper Egypt. Their rule was disastrous for foreign traders, and scarcely more favourable to the interests of the native population, whose main reason for existence, in the eyes of its masters, was to furnish the needs of their grasping

oligarchy. These self-seeking rulers and their subordinates were entirely unconcerned with the public weal and entirely uninterested in administration. Egypt was not even a farm in their eyes; it was merely a fief, which they exploited without a thought for the peasants who lived on its soil. No doubt a minority of the natives, Mussulmans or even Christians, profited by this system of exploitation, as the necessary intermediaries between the oppressor and the oppressed. But all travellers who had visited the country, and all the Europeans who had lived in it, were in agreement in describing the utter destitution of the *fellah*, the Egyptian peasant. Community of religion was the sole bond between the victims of this system and the despots who benefited by it.

This situation was well known to the French government when it decided on the Egyptian expedition. It had been exposed in full detail not only in travellers' accounts such as those of Volney and Savary, but in the writings of many predecessors of theirs who had proposed the conquest and colonization of the lower valley of the Nile. Published and unpublished documents alike contained plenty of information on the social condition of the Egyptians, their customs, and their character, and on the ethnography, the land system, the fiscal system, and the economic resources of Egypt. Finally, two men in a position to fill any gaps in Bonaparte's personal acquaintance with the subject had been present in Paris during the whole period of the working out of the plan and the organization of the enterprise, and sent to Toulon to embark with the general staff—Magallon, who held the post of French consul general in Egypt, and the orientalist Venture de Paradis, a former interpreter at the French consulate at Cairo. Bonaparte had laid down the general principles of a local policy which was simply the implementing of the advice given in proposals, reports, and memoranda put forward by Magallon and many of his predecessors.

Since Egypt was no longer under the effective sovereignty of the sultan, it seemed possible to separate the sultan's cause from that of the Mamelukes. There seemed no reason why the sultan should not be induced to leave the Mamelukes

to their fate, in return either for some concrete advantage or for some formal satisfaction. The concrete advantage might consist in help in the reconquest of the Crimea ; formal satisfaction might be offered in the acknowledgement of his suzerainty in Egypt through the payment of the same tribute as in the past. An ambassador was accordingly to be sent to Constantinople to try to effect an agreement on these lines ; Bonaparte's desire was for Talleyrand to be sent. Without waiting to learn the result of this mission, Bonaparte intended to discount its success, and, in anticipation of the sultan's acquiescence, to present himself to the Egyptians as an ally of their legitimate sovereign. This fiction would create an illusion in their minds which would further the aims of the expedition. If the negotiations with Turkey were successful and the fiction became reality, the agreement with the sultan would contribute both to the external security and to the internal tranquillity of the French occupation.

The inhabitants of Egypt were, for the most part, victims of Mameluke oppression, and it seemed possible, therefore, to separate the case of the native population from that of the Mameluke beys. It was of great importance to prevent the population from making common cause with its tyrants, to secure its neutrality or even its active sympathy. But this end could only be attained by pursuing political action alongside the military operations, during and after the conquest, by humouring and reassuring the inhabitants, respecting their beliefs, their interests, and their usages, disarming their suspicions and gaining their confidence—in a word, by putting into practice what has since been called a 'native policy.' The development of this policy will give us a practical insight into its methods and its results.

If the policy which Bonaparte proposed to carry out in Egypt was not to remain academic, he had to have the co-operation of his soldiers. What would be the use of having chosen the most suitable methods for detaching the Egyptians from the Mamelukes if, in practice, the conduct

of the troops took no account of them? It was thus of the first importance to dictate to the army its attitude toward the inhabitants, and to impose on it a rigorous discipline. This was the object of a proclamation and two orders which were drawn up by the general-in-chief after leaving Malta and printed on the flagship *Orient*.

Bonaparte described the Mameluke beys as the sole enemy to be combated in Egypt: a few days after the arrival of the army they would "no longer exist." Except in regard to the Mamelukes, the proclamation urged the troops to show forbearance and clemency; they were to respect the country's religion and customs, its women, and private and public property:

'The peoples with whom we are going to live are Mahometans; their first article of faith is this: "There is no other god but God, and Mahomet is his prophet." Do not contradict them; behave with them as we have behaved with Jews and with Italians; show respect for their muftis<sup>1</sup> and their imams, as you have done for rabbis and bishops. Have the same tolerance for the ceremonies prescribed by the Koran, for the mosques, that you have had for convents and synagogues, for the religion of Moses and that of Jesus Christ. The Roman legions protected all religions.

'You will meet here with usages different from those of Europe; you must accustom yourselves to them. The peoples among whom we are going do not treat women as we do; but in all countries violation is the crime of a monster. Pillage enriches only a small number; it dishonours us and destroys our resources; and it makes

<sup>1</sup> The following are the meanings of Arab titles or appellations which will occur frequently in these pages. *Mufti*: legal adviser, expert in Mussulman law. *Imam*: originally guide, model; thus the one who leads at prayer, the officiating priest of the Mussulman religion. *Sheik*: originally one who is venerable through his age; hence, head of family or tribe, and hence dignitary of the religious cult, high official, personage of eminence through his function, his merit, or his maturity. *Ulema*: plural of *alim*, doctor of Mussulman theology. *Cadi*: Mussulman judge. *Khorbadji*: a Turkish courtesy title, applied to middle class persons. *Sherif*: descendant of Mahomet. *Aga*: a courtesy title and military rank. *Hadji*: one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. *Emir*: a high military title.

enemies of peoples whom it is to our interest to have as friends.'

This was followed by the first general orders, which were in effect police regulations, against violation, pillage, turbulence, extortion, and arbitrary requisitions and levies. The penalty laid down for those convicted of these crimes was death. As a general rule, no requisition or levy could be lawful unless it was made under instructions from the *ordonnateur en chef* of the army,<sup>1</sup> acting under orders from the *général en chef*. In urgent cases lieutenant generals might authorize *commissaires des guerres* (subordinates of the *ordonnateur en chef*) to proceed to requisitions, the purpose and the methods of which were then strictly defined.

A second army order dealt with the seizure of the public revenues and of the premises and registers of the Mamelukes' tax collectors. The premises were to be sealed by a *commissaire des guerres*, a divisional paymaster,<sup>2</sup> and a staff officer, assisted by a notable of the country and a sheik. The Mamelukes were to be arrested and sent to headquarters. The rest of the order had reference to the requisitioning of camels and horses : any soldier who entered the property of a native to steal one or more of these animals was to be shot.

The proclamation and the two army orders were transmitted on 10 Messidor (June 28th) to the lieutenant generals under cover of a letter from Berthier, who directed that they should have them frequently read to the soldiers and given the utmost publicity.

The French were thus instructed, before landing in Egypt, as to the way in which they were to behave toward the inhabitants of the country. It remained to be seen how the inhabitants of the country would behave toward the French.

<sup>1</sup> The *ordonnateur en chef* of the army was responsible for the subsistence, the maintenance, and the provisioning of the troops. His functions corresponded to those exercised to-day by a senior administrative officer of the quartermaster general's staff. The post was held first by Sucy and later by Daure.

<sup>2</sup> Agent of the paymaster general of the army, who was responsible for the payment of army pay and of all the expenses of the expeditionary corps. The paymaster general of the army was Estève throughout the duration of the expedition.

When our vessels appeared off Alexandria, the population had already been warned by the Porte and was expecting their arrival. Nelson's squadron, on its appearance within sight of shore, had been taken for a French naval force, and the town had been placed in a state of defence. The inhabitants showed their intention to resist any invasion, whether French or English. Thus Bonaparte found at Alexandria no sympathetic population, welcoming with joy the approaching hour of its deliverance, and not even an indifferent and neutral population, but a population warned and hostile. The Alexandrians looked askance on the new Alexander.

On learning this from the consul, Bonaparte saw no reason for changing his plans, but he left nothing undone to bring to neutrality, if not to sympathy, the people who were greeting him as an enemy. If there had not been an English squadron in the neighbourhood, compelling him not to lose an instant, it is probable that he would have tried to establish relations with the city and to enter into communication with it. But, although he was deprived of this opportunity and warned of the preparations made for defence against him, he still hoped to prevent a conflict, preferring that Alexandria should open her gates to him through persuasion rather than force.

For, as Berthier writes, Bonaparte 'wanted to parley and to avoid an assault and its consequences.' He went, therefore, with his staff from the Marabout shore, where the landing took place, to the site of Pompey's Column, the best point from which to look around, estimate the situation, and decide. The fortified walls which he saw from his observation post, and the towers flanking them, were crowded with inhabitants, whose leaders and the women and children among them were urging resistance. Shots were fired from poor cannon on the ramparts. This show of warfare, weak as it was in face of the French army of the Orient, left the general-in-chief no choice of methods. 'He could not make them listen to him,' writes Berthier; 'he was forced to decide to attack a people whom he would have preferred to have as friends.'



The struggle had been entered into against his will ; Bonaparte tried to limit it as far as possible and to bring it to an end as soon as possible. When the attack had been ordered and the ramparts won, he would have been glad to complete his conquest of the town, of which he was not entirely master, by gentle means. When part of his troops had occupied the new town and another part was before Pharos and the Pharillon, he went to the rising ground of the Old Port, 'his intention being to assemble the army there in order to make the enemy capitulate.' Once more his hopes were disappointed. But the furious energy of the besieged population did not discourage him from perseverance. During the street fighting he sent for the commandant of a Turkish caravel at anchor in the port and told him his intentions, and he also detached officers to visit the notables of Alexandria. In the end 'the imams, the sheiks, and the sherif came to us as friends,' says Berthier, 'assuring us that they had been deceived as to the intention of the French.'

A good deal of powder had been needed to convince these important personages of their error. The argument to which it had been necessary to resort in order to convert them robbed their conversion of some of its spontaneity. The frankly hostile reception which Alexandria had given the French army constituted, in reality, a check to the hopes which had been built on the unpopularity of the Mamelukes. Mussulmans of every extraction and of every condition had defended the soil of Egypt against the invader, giving way in the end only before superior force.

Bonaparte would have been glad to spare them that experience. His hope of avoiding a conflict, and his efforts to limit it and end it, may be explained by his desire to reduce his own losses ; but they indicate also his desire to humour the local population and not to compromise the future of his policy. The less Bonaparte was inclined by nature to moderation in military operations, the more significant is the readiness for conciliation that he showed in the course of the capture of Alexandria.

Once master of the city, Bonaparte set to work to complete

by persuasion the submission he had secured by force, and to take action not only at Alexandria but all over Egypt to remove the hostility of which the Alexandrians had given proof through their defence. On the evening of 14 Messidor (July 2nd), the very day on which their resistance was overcome, he had thousands of copies distributed of a proclamation which had been printed on board the *Orient*. Like many conquerors before and after him, he announced to the inhabitants of the country he had invaded that it was not they but their government that he had been fighting. He described this government, whose downfall he decreed, to the Egyptians as their real enemy. He indicted the Mamelukes, that 'gang of slaves who are tyrannizing over the loveliest part of the world,' as Egypt's oppressors. He denounced them as incapable despots, responsible for the decay and impoverishment of the country, as insatiable monopolizers of all the country's resources, as privileged persons whose unmerited wealth was created out of the destitution of the people. 'What wisdom, what talents, what virtues distinguish the Mamelukes, that they alone should have a soft and pleasant life? Is there good land? It belongs to the Mamelukes. Is there a fine slave, a fine horse, a fine house? They belong to the Mamelukes.' Bonaparte had come to the victims of this rapacity 'to restore your rights.' Thus it was as a liberator, on the banks of the Nile as on those of the Rhine, the Po, and the Tiber, that the French army presented itself to an enslaved population, and the first idea its general-in-chief propagated among this primitive people was no other than that of the Revolution concerning the equality of all men and the inequality of privileges. 'All men are equal before God; wisdom, talents, and virtues alone create difference between them.'

The Egyptians might, however, prefer Mussulman tyrants to infidel liberators. Bonaparte accordingly exercised his ingenuity in the endeavour to remove the stigma of non-adhesion to the religion of the Prophet from himself and his army. He did not content himself with denying ill-will towards Islam; he protested his respect for it. 'People of

Egypt, you will be told that I have come to destroy your religion : do not believe it ! Reply that I respect God, his prophet Mahomet, and the Koran more than the Mamelukes !' Without positively giving his adhesion to Islam, Bonaparte went so far as to claim for himself and his soldiers the title of Mussulman : ' Cadis, sheiks, imams, khorbadjis, tell the people that we too are true Mussulmans ! ' In support of this claim he adduced his own harshness to the Holy See and the Order of Malta, and France's traditional alliance with the Sultan, Khalif and Commander of the Faithful : ' Is it not we that destroyed the Pope, who used to say that war should be made against the Mussulmans ? Is it not we that destroyed the Knights of Malta, because in their madness they believed that God wanted them to go to war against the Mussulmans ? Is it not we who through all ages have been the friends of the Great Sovereign (may God accomplish his desires !) and the enemies of his enemies ? '

Among the enemies of the sultan, Napoleon counted the Mamelukes. He set over against the secular friendship between France and the Ottoman Porte the revolts of the beys, their intractability, and their usurpations. He denounced these oppressors of the people as rebellious subjects ; he had come not only to restore the people's rights to them but to ' punish the usurpers.' As avenger of the imperial authority repudiated by the Mamelukes, he exhorted the Egyptians to affirm their loyalty toward their legitimate sovereign, whom he associated with the French Republic in a sort of condominium. He ordered all towns and villages to hoist with the tricolour ' the flag of the Great Sovereign, our friend.' He desired that prayers should be continued as usual, with the ritual invocation to God modified as follows : ' Glory to the sultan ! Glory to the French army, his friend ! Curses on the Mamelukes, and happiness to the people of Egypt ! '

Everything in this proclamation combined to present the part Bonaparte invited the Egyptians to play—to make common cause with him against the Mamelukes, or at least to remain neutral—as in conformity with their own interest,

reconcilable with their conscience, and in accord with their duty toward the sultan. To those who should rally to him, he promised favours ; to those who preserved neutrality, he promised tranquillity ; to those who fought him, he promised death.

This manifesto was addressed to the inhabitants of the whole of Egypt, and Bonaparte took steps to get it spread through the interior of the country. He had set at liberty the Mussulman sailors whom he had taken out of the prisons in Malta ; he now sent them to their home villages, giving each of them some copies of the proclamation. In this way copies were sent into Cairo.

In addition to the native population, Bonaparte tried to detach the sultan's official representatives in Egypt from the Mamelukes. There was a Turkish caravel stationed in the port of Alexandria : 'You need have no misgivings,' the general-in-chief wrote to its commanding officer ; 'you belong to our great friend the sultan.' There was a pasha resident in Cairo as nominal governor of Egypt : 'You should be the master of the beys,' Bonaparte wrote to him ; 'instead they keep you at Cairo without authority or power : you must be glad to see my arrival. No doubt you have already been informed that I have not come to do anything against the Koran or against the sultan. You know that the French nation is the one and only ally the sultan has in Europe.' It was as part of his effort to detach the populations of Alexandria, Cairo, and the rest of the country from the Mamelukes that Bonaparte was working now on the official representative of the Imperial authority and now on the commanding officer of a Turkish warship.

Bonaparte was detained at Alexandria from 14 to 19 Messidor (July 2nd to 7th). He turned the time to account by making temporary provision for the organization of the conquered city, entering into direct relations with its inhabitants, and establishing the basis of mutual relations between French and Egyptians. In dealing with administration and government, his actions were directed to the same end as his words—to rallying the natives to him.

His proclamation on arrival had already called on dignitaries of all ranks, sheiks, cadis, imams, to remain in office, and had laid down that civil life was to continue undisturbed, including all occupations and every religious practice. Before leaving Alexandria, he expressly confirmed in his powers the chief native magistrate of the city, the sherif Said Mohammed el Koraïm. Koraïm had been the organizer of resistance and the last to maintain it. Hoping to win him by generosity, Bonaparte said to him : ' I took you with arms in your hands ; I could treat you as a prisoner. But you have shown courage, and, since I regard courage as inseparable from honour, I return you your arms. I think you will be as faithful to the Republic as you have been to a bad government.' The conquered leader seemed touched by this procedure, and inclined to respond to the confidence placed in him. Since his surrender he had not quitted headquarters ; he had been eagerly obliging and obsequious toward his conqueror. The general-in-chief, writes Vivant-Denon, was still in bed when Koraïm came into his ante-room. Bonaparte placed faith in his sincerity, and felt it advisable to maintain the sherif in the position he occupied. He issued this order : ' The general-in-chief has been very satisfied with the conduct of Said Mohammed el Koraïm since the arrival of the French army, and appoints him governor of the district of Alexandria. The general-in-chief will transmit orders to the Said through General Kléber, who is in command of the whole district ; this will not prevent the Said from corresponding with the general-in-chief whenever he desires. General Kléber will apply to the Said for all he needs for the service of the army and the policing of the Arab district.' This amounted to saying that, under Kléber's authority and supervision, Said Mohammed el Koraïm was to remain head of the native community, and to be its intermediary with the supreme command.

This was an extension to the local hierarchy, from the very outset, of the principles of association and of indirect administration—associating native advisers with the foreign power (which reserved to itself the initiative and supervision

of affairs), and subordinating them to it as its executive agents. The advantage of this method of government in Bonaparte's view was that it involved the minimum of intervention in the natives' relations with one another, and left them undisturbed in their habitual way of living. 'We must gradually accustom these people,' he said, 'to our ways and our outlook, and meanwhile we must allow them plenty of latitude between themselves in their internal affairs; above all, we must not interfere with their judicial system, which is founded on divine law and keeps entirely to the Koran.' This is from his instructions to General Kléber, commanding at Alexandria, and General Menou, commanding at Rosetta; and he gave as the main principles underlying his instructions these two: 'To keep as far as possible on good terms with the Arabs; and to show the greatest consideration for the muftis and the principal sheiks of the country.'

Bonaparte had himself put these principles into application during his stay in Alexandria. When chiefs of Arab tribes in the neighbourhood came to make submission to him and to bring prisoners to him, he received them well, was at pains to entertain them, regaled them with music, and allowed them ten *louis* apiece. He affected to place faith in their bad excuses, to credit them with sincerity, and to be taken in by their gestures of friendship. He multiplied attentions to the native authorities. The inhabitants of Alexandria were called upon to deliver up their firearms within twenty-four hours; but muftis, imams, and sheiks were allowed to retain their arms and to continue to carry them. The disarmament of the mass of the people was a necessary precaution; the privilege accorded to the leaders was an adroit concession to their vanity and a well-judged homage to their influence, which Bonaparte proposed to turn to the profit of his own authority. With the same purpose he devised for them an external decoration, as a symbol of their rank, which he recognized, and of the confidence he placed in them. It was a tricolour sash, to be worn of right only by muftis, and to be available for grant as a reward to imams and sheiks who had merited it.

The colours were French, the material Oriental ; the special distinction would mark them off from simple private individuals, all of whom would be required to wear the blue, white, and red cockade. Military honours were to be rendered to personages wearing the tricolour sash, and when they came before any constituted authority they were to be introduced with special deference.

The utmost publicity was given to these provisions, which were laid down in a decree of 15 Messidor (July 3rd). The decree was translated into Arabic, communicated to the notables, and proclaimed in the town through the agency of the sherif. The idea was good—to try to conciliate the leaders (who held both civil and religious powers, closely intermingled), by flattering their vanity and increasing their prestige. It remained to be seen whether their vanity would actually be satisfied and their prestige increased by an emblem symbolizing not only their rank in the hierarchy but their public acceptance of French rule. Would they feel flattered, would they be envied as the only persons authorized to profit, in a detail of their dress, from the general obligation of wearing the tricolour? Would not that obligation, reminiscent of revolutionary days, itself be resented as a humiliation by a Mussulman people accustomed to regard Infidel usages as sacrilegious? As it turned out, the Egyptians' feelings seem to have been excessively hurt by this unusual demand. The news of it preceded the French to Cairo : Alexandria had been captured, and the Alexandrians disarmed and requested to wear 'on their breasts a cockade consisting of three round bits of cloth or silk, like a crown-piece ; one is blue, one red, and the third white ; they are superposed and so cut that all three colours are seen.'

Bonaparte may have been ill-advised, but his intention was certainly not to give offence to the population, still less to its leaders. After pourparlers with the muftis and sheiks of Alexandria, a general agreement was arrived at between them and Bonaparte, which they signed on 16 Messidor (July 4th). The signatories to this document, who described themselves as notables of the city, gave the general-in-chief

an undertaking to maintain their laws and institutions and to continue to exercise their functions. How surprised their subjects would have been if they had carried out their functions as they promised! 'They will judge disputes according to the purest justice, and will carefully eschew the tortuous path of iniquity . . . ; they will occupy themselves with the means of making equity prevail, working with zeal for the good of the country, the happiness of its inhabitants, and the destruction of vicious and wicked persons.' No doubt Bonaparte was not proposing to see to the literal fulfilment of these fine phrases ; on the other hand, he could not be equally indifferent to the execution of the following engagement : ' They promise not to betray the French army, never to attempt to injure it, not to act against its interests, and not to enter into any plot which might be formed against it.' Bonaparte undertook for his part to use his troops in the prevention of pillage, violence, and oppression, and to enforce respect for property, religion, and public and private worship. It was his desire to see ' all the inhabitants remain in their religion,' and his intention to assure them ' the peaceful enjoyment of their properties.' Such was the virtual contract concluded on the morrow of the victory between the *général en chef* of the French army and some of the most authoritative representatives of Islam in Alexandria<sup>1</sup>.

The circumstance that brought face to face the conqueror of Arcole and these devout followers of Mahomet does indeed deserve attention ; for this was the day on which France, as a colonizing power, first came into contact with African Islam. Bonaparte is entitled to the credit of having realized the power of Islam as a spiritual force, and of having been the first to come to terms with it, instead of

<sup>1</sup> These pious personages signed at the foot of the document drawn up on the 20th of the moon of Moharram, in the year 1213 of the Hegira, in the forms of the most devout humility : ' The poor Ibrahim el Bourgui el Hanafi, whom may God pardon ! the poor Soliman Kanide, mufti of the sect of Malek, whom may God pardon ! the poor Ahmed Abdullah, muezzin of the minaret of the village of Edkou, of the sect of Shafi ; one who has need of his Lord, Soliman el Kalaf ; one who has need of his Lord, a just Sovereign, his servitor Abassi el Koidi, whom may God pardon ! ' etc.



relying entirely on his material force to tame it. This is the element of interest in his negotiations with these poor wretches, with whom he did not disdain to hold a divan, to palaver endlessly in accordance with the custom of the country, and finally to exchange mutual undertakings.

Even before his promise to the notables of Alexandria to enforce respect for religion and property, Bonaparte had taken care to impose it on his soldiers. On 15 Messidor (July 3rd) Berthier had written to the lieutenant generals : ' The general-in-chief desires that the Turks<sup>1</sup> shall continue as in the past to perform their religious rites in the mosques ; he expressly forbids all French persons, military or other, to enter the mosques or crowd round the door of a mosque. You will give orders to each regimental commander to fall in his men and read this order to them. You will also have read out the general-in-chief's order concerning looting and those who violate it. Any who disobey it you will have shot. It is of the utmost importance that soldiers shall pay for everything they take in the town, and that the Turks shall neither be robbed nor insulted. We have to make friends of them, and to make war only against the Mamelukes.'

Thanks to these stringent orders, the army encamped in the streets and squares of the town was guilty of no disorders, acts of violence, or exactions. Discipline had relaxed during the crossing, and Bonaparte was concerned to tighten it during his stay in Alexandria. Any soldier who disobeyed an order of his was mercilessly punished—with death.

The more rigorous the prohibition of looting, the more necessary it was for the command to provide for the needs of the army. This could only be done by utilizing the resources of the country in foodstuffs, live stock, and materials. Bonaparte, in providing for this, was careful to do no injury to the peaceful population. He simply confiscated the properties of the Mamelukes ; he seized goods belonging to subjects of nations at war with France ; but he ordered that the army should pay in every other case the price of wheat, victuals, and timber procured. He

<sup>1</sup> ' Turk ' is used here in the sense of ' Mussulman,' as often by Bonaparte and his representatives.

required an immediate sum of 150,000 francs ; it was to be supplied by the public revenue offices and recovered by them from the first customs receipts. The twenty richest merchants of Alexandria were requested to disburse the equivalent of 300,000 French *livres* in the local currency, but were to receive an equal value in ingots of gold or silver (the army had brought a quantity with it), and three of the merchants concerned were to arrange the rate of exchange. In order to assure regularity in the markets, the order was given for a table of relative values in French and Egyptian currency to be drawn up. Here again the commission drawing up the table was to be a mixed body, with French representatives sitting alongside the native merchants. These were two new applications of the principle of association, which Bonaparte put into practice wherever possible. He had already requested the assistance of the civil and religious authorities of the country in defining the mutual relations between French and Egyptians ; and in settling the basis of their business relations he was concerned to have the collaboration of the native merchants.

This policy could only be judged by results. In any case, Alexandria, the army's base of operations, had become the temporary seat of the civil activities which everywhere accompanied military action. Already useful innovations were being introduced. On 19 Messidor (July 7th), the order was given for the French, Arabic, and Greek printing apparatus to be landed from the *Orient* and set up on shore ready for use within forty-eight hours, in order to print as quickly as possible 4,000 copies in Arabic of the general-in-chief's proclamation. The day this order was carried out marks an epoch in the history of Egypt : printing was still unknown there ; it was introduced in the train of the French army ; Egypt owed that revelation to the French. The first text printed on Egyptian soil was the second, Arabic edition of the proclamation of 13 Messidor, the copies of which have the inscription '*Imprimé à Alexandrie, au camp des Français.*' Marcel, the orientalist scholar, was the organizer of this printing shop, and it was under his

direction that the first Arabic and French copies pulled off the presses in Alexandria were produced.

On another point Bonaparte's initiative brought the Egyptians not a lesson but a material benefit. An order was issued on 17 Messidor (July 5th) for sanitary regulations to be drawn up for the port of Alexandria, and for the installation of a hospital. Instructions given to Kléber by the general-in-chief requested him to give particular attention to this, and to exact rigorous compliance with the quarantine regulations. Epidemics, especially plague, had always been one of the scourges of Egypt; rarely did a year pass without mention in the correspondence of the French consuls of the appearance of 'contagion,' often carried from one Levant port to another by some contaminated ship. The necessity for the protection of the army from epidemics occasioned the adoption of measures from which the native population benefited. The future hospital, to be set up on the model of that of Marseilles, would become a guarantee of public health.

On the afternoon of 19 Messidor (July 7th), Bonaparte set out for Damanhour. By then there was evidence already of the ultimate scope of the political and administrative task which he had enthusiastically undertaken and actively pushed forward. The rapidity with which pacification had been carried out at Alexandria and in its environs gave the French, who did not yet realize the duplicity of the Oriental, hope of success and confidence in the future. 'The inhabitants formed a single family with us,' writes André Peyrusse, of the staff of the paymaster general of the army. It may be said that this young man was not an authority; but the closest of the military collaborators of the general-in-chief expressed much the same opinion. 'The people were in terror,' writes Berthier; 'they seem to be becoming friends of a nation which can show respect for manners and customs and religion. War on the Mamelukes! is the cry of the part of Egypt we are inhabiting.' As for the regions through which the army had still to penetrate, Berthier did not carry optimism to the point of imagining that this was already their cry also.

### III

#### *IN POSSESSION OF CAIRO*

FROM ALEXANDRIA to Cairo the army had to march diagonally across part of the Egyptian delta. At Ramanieh, where the Nile was reached, a general order reminded the troops that they were making war on the Mamelukes, and not on the people of the country. It was not an easy task to restrain from pillage men who were exhausted by a march through the desert, overwhelmed by the African sun, and disappointed with the appearance of the country. The command did not always succeed ; the soldiers did not abstain from marauding ; they even looted villages and destroyed crops. But any excesses which Bonaparte himself witnessed were severely repressed and publicly denounced.

The army was harassed by the nomad Arabs and opposed by the Mamelukes, but encountered no resistance from the settled population, which everywhere merely looked on at the invasion, sometimes passively, sometimes eagerly and demonstratively. At Rosetta the inhabitants quietly watched from their house doors or their open shops as the division detached to occupy the town marched in. 'It would be impossible,' an officer wrote, 'to imagine more absolute trust and resignation.' Between Rosetta and Ramanieh, the villagers stood on either side of the road to see the soldiers pass and to give them a welcome ; deputations came to meet the column, carrying banners ; the women, 'in sign of joy,' uttered 'sounds which were exactly like the cooing of turtle-doves.' In the region of Menouf the natives were equally cordial, the men offering the soldiers water, water-melons, or bread, and the women bearing

witness to their pleasure 'by a most bizarre sort of chattering.'

Among the incidents of the journey there were certainly others that harmonized ill with the general indifference, and still less with the expressions of satisfaction. In this same town of Rosetta, in which the troops made so peaceful an entry, the populace had been trying before their arrival to burn the home of a French family, whom afterwards it hastened to beg for protection. The richest inhabitants had fled to Foueh, in the delta, whence they had to be induced to return by the dispatch of an emissary bearing a friendly proclamation. At Damanhour, although the mufti had come out to Desaix 'with a torch, a loaf, honey, and cheese,' a soldier was assassinated during the night. But it was permissible to suppose that these acts of fury, panic, and fanaticism were due to prejudices which would be dissipated when the natives saw that the invader had no intention of doing them any harm.

It was also certainly less easy to get practical services out of the fellah than demonstrations of friendship. 'The Egyptians,' an officer wrote, 'are both cowards and greedy. So they are afraid to do anything in the service of the French, for fear of the return of the Mamelukes; and as soon as they have done the least thing they express the most ardent desire that we should defeat the Mamelukes.' But if the fellaheen were not as serviceable as they were demonstrative and obsequious, it was excusable that they should fear reprisals from the Mamelukes, who had not yet been destroyed or even driven out, and might put in an appearance at any time.

All things considered, if this was the attitude of the Egyptian people before the defeat of the Mamelukes, what might be expected of them after it? The Mamelukes were defeated in the plain of the Pyramids; and the hopes built on the political consequences of their defeat seemed to be confirmed by the fact that it opened the gates of Cairo to Bonaparte without a struggle.

The civilian population of Cairo was variously affected

by the news of the invasion : some were for resistance, some daunted. The fear grew as the army approached, and in the end entirely prevailed over the spirit of resistance. The arrival of couriers sent from Alexandria by Said Mohammed el Koraim had already 'filled the city with terror,' but it had still been hoped that the Mamelukes would succeed in stopping Bonaparte's progress. The day the news reached Cairo of their first defeat at Shobrakit (Shebreiss) was also 'a day of terror.'

But the outward attitude of the people and their leaders was still in contrast with the apprehensions that were increasingly mastering them. Every day ulema and sheiks assembled in the mosque of El Azhar, reciting prayers and invoking the protection of Allah and of Mahomet against the infidel invaders. The chief of the sherifs ascended to the citadel, hoisted there the standard of the Prophet, and carried this sacred emblem through the whole city as far as Boulak, escorted by the populace amid the recital of verses from the Koran, the beating of drums, and the playing of a sort of flutes—two instruments whose sound is a regular contribution to the racket of every native procession. The trumpet was sounded to summon the inhabitants to the entrenchments. Illusory fortifications, thrown up without plan or method, followed the line of the trenches. Domiciliary visits were made to the native Christians, and threats were made against them; their churches and convents were similarly visited. European merchants were arrested and confined in the citadel or in private houses. But while the preparations for defence were in progress, appeals for resistance being made, and fanaticism being worked up, the rumour spread among the people that 'fear has entered the heart of the princes,' and that they had placed their wealth in safety and prepared for flight.

These suspicions were not entirely at fault. Of the three heads of the government, Ibrahim Bey, Abu Bekir Pasha, and Murad Bey, the two first were for either taking flight or entering into *pourparlers* with Bonaparte; only the third was whole-heartedly for resistance.

The rumours about the indecision of the leaders 'increased

the terror of the inhabitants.' The lack of cohesion in the measures of defence, and the confusion and divisions and hesitations among the great, made the people feel the uselessness of resistance. They despaired of repelling the French, feared that they would become victims of the passions with which the French were imagined to be filled, and saw safety only in flight. 'Those who wanted to flee were arrested ; if they had not been, no one would have been left in Cairo.' Thus, even before the battle of the Pyramids had decided the fate of the city, the civilian population was in terror of a morrow of no uncertain character.

Once the issue of the fighting was known, there was unqualified panic. The night following the battle, that of 3-4 Thermidor (July 21st-22nd), was 'a night of anguish and horror.' Fugitives crowded around the gates of the city, driving before them asses and camels on which they had hastily placed their families and part of their goods. At some distance from the ramparts they were awaited by bands of Arab plunderers, who robbed them of everything and in many cases massacred them. 'There remained none at Cairo,' relates an Arab writer, with obvious exaggeration, 'save those who could not walk or who had not the means to flee.' The first to give the signal for this stampede were the heads of the government. Murad fled in the direction of Upper Egypt ; Ibrahim set out for Syria, taking with him Abu Bekir Pasha, the sultan's representative. 'The great ones, the officers of the janissaries, the chief of the sherifs, the sheiks,' followed their masters' example. The only regular authority who remained at his post was the kiaya or deputy of the pasha ; and he had neither power nor prestige left. Abandoned to its own devices and master of the town, the populace burned or ransacked the deserted homes of the beys, and threatened the houses in which the European merchants were held captive. The burning of the Mamelukes' flotilla, which was flaming on the Nile, led the inhabitants of Cairo to believe that the French had fired Gizeh and Boulak, and were destroying everything along the line of their advance. 'Never,' writes a witness of these scenes, 'was there a crueller night. The ear heard the tale of deeds of

which the eye would not have been able to support the vision.'

In this abyss of panic and anarchy, submission seemed the only recourse, alike against the danger without and the danger within, the only means of appeasing the fury with which the French were credited and of restraining the dregs of the local population. On the morning of 4 Thermidor (July 22nd), the ulema and those of the sheiks who had not fled met in the mosque of El Azhar. Had they done so spontaneously or at the instance of the kiaya, himself acting under instigation from the French camp? The actual circumstances are not clearly established. In any case, they decided to send a message of peace to Bonaparte. But their apprehensions in regard to him were revealed in the means they chose for conveying the message. None of them dared to expose his precious person on so dangerous a mission, and they transmitted their offers of capitulation to the *général en chef* by two men of the people.

'Where are your great men and your sheiks?' asked Bonaparte of these two messengers. 'Why have they not come, so that we might take measures to assure public tranquillity?' The two poor fellows replied that their sheiks had sent them to him to ask for quarter. 'I have already granted what they ask,' he answered. Then, giving them a letter in reply to the one they had brought, he sent them away with these words: 'The sheiks and the janissaries' officers must come here; we will choose seven persons to form a council and take measures for the general safety.'

In response to this some of the sheiks and notables went in person to the French camp at Gizeh. Bonaparte gave them a cordial welcome, and then, since their appearance probably suggested no exalted rank, he asked whether these were 'the great sheiks.' He was told that the great sheiks had fled. 'What are they afraid of?' he asked. 'Write to them to come back; we will set up a council to assure the tranquillity of the city and the maintenance of order.' The return of this deputation to Cairo, on the evening of 4 Thermidor, 'restored security to the people,' says a native



writer. That was, of course, the result Bonaparte aimed at getting from the two interviews. From a simple instinct of self-preservation, the population of Cairo had placed its fate in the hands of the French. Panic and disorder had thrown it upon their mercy. This was not a people's act of spontaneous adhesion to a liberator, but homage to victorious force, an appeal to the conqueror's clemency, a precaution against looting and murder. It was important to replace the feelings that had prompted submission to force by those of a more willing submission more freely made. It seemed possible to secure this by a skilful policy, and this became Bonaparte's objective.

The first feeling that it was desirable to inspire in the people was one of security. They had to be shown that in submission they had found the safety they sought, the guarantee of respect of their material interests, their faith, and their religious worship. This was the purpose of the proclamation Bonaparte addressed to the inhabitants before entering Cairo :

' People of Cairo, I am pleased with your conduct. You have done well not to take sides against me. I have come to destroy the race of the Mamelukes, but to protect commerce and the natives of the country. All those who are afraid may reassure themselves ; let those who have gone away return to their homes ; let prayers be said to-day as usual, as I wish them to be always. Have no fear for your families, your homes, your properties, or, above all, for the religion of the Prophet, which I love.'

This eloquent and temperate proclamation concluded with the announcement of a first administrative measure—the setting up of the council, or ' Divan,' already mentioned in the Gizeh interviews, ' to assure tranquillity and the maintenance of order.'

In order that the conduct of the soldiers should not belie the assurances Bonaparte had given and compromise their effect, they were again reminded of their duty before entering the city to occupy it. Three orders issued by Berthier renewed the prohibition of looting and of seizure of horses,



BONAPARTE'S ENTRY INTO CAIRO

*Engraved by Raffet. Author's collection*



made the commanding officers responsible for the behaviour of their men, and ordered the circular on discipline to be read again in every unit.

Thanks to these measures and to the good spirit of the troops, the occupation of Cairo took place without incident or disturbance. Bonaparte made his entry on 7 Thermidor and proceeded to install himself in the house of Mohammed Bey el Elfi, in the Ezbekieh square; by then the population had recovered from its panic, and fear was replaced by an amused curiosity. As the *général en chef* made his way through the city the crowd was so great that his escort had difficulty in getting him through. Everything was food for wonder for the crowd—the infantry, foot-soldiers where the natives had no conception of warriors other than on horseback; the uniforms, the cannon, the arms, the drums. The absence of arrogance in the officers, even those of the highest rank, the simplicity of their bearing and manners, the gay good nature and the generosity of the soldiers, encouraged the inhabitants to rub shoulders with the conquerors. They had imagined them as grim and fierce—instead of which, to their astonishment, they found them ‘going about the streets unarmed, troubling nobody, laughing with the people, paying well for whatever they needed, giving a talari<sup>1</sup> for a fowl and 20 parats<sup>2</sup> for an egg, the prices they were used to in their own country. Confidence was established, and the food shops reopened.’

This was a vast change in the spirit of a population which two days before had fled in terror at Bonaparte’s approach. It was reassured once for all, and had passed so rapidly from extreme nervousness to almost complete confidence that this very mobility seemed to justify the expectation that time and a wise policy would complete the evolution with the rallying of the population to French rule.

‘When the inhabitants are certain of the capture of Cairo, they will submit to the French for all time.’ Such was the forecast of a Frenchman, Villiers du Terrage, of the

<sup>1</sup> Thaler.

<sup>2</sup> The Levantine halfpenny.

Polytechnique, with regard to the impression which that certainty would produce at Rosetta. Cairo was now captured, the Mamelukes conquered, their government destroyed, their leaders put to flight with the remains of their forces. Fortune had pronounced between Bonaparte and his adversaries. Her pronouncement could not fail to be known soon throughout Egypt. One of the factors which up to then had been capable of keeping the natives estranged from the French, the uncertainty with regard to the final issue, no longer entered into consideration. It was reasonable to hope that the moral effect of the victory of the Pyramids, reinforced by that of the occupation of Cairo without a blow, would consolidate the French rule over the points already occupied and pave the way for it in the rest of the country.

Only two points had been occupied before Cairo—Alexandria and Rosetta. While Bonaparte was marching on Cairo, Kléber at Alexandria and Menou at Rosetta had carried out the policy of which the *général en chef* had traced the broad lines and set the example. They had shown the same vigilance in protecting persons and property and the honour of the natives, in assuring respect for their customs, and in leaving them at peace in their daily occupations. Kléber repressed the excesses of Admiral Brueys' sailors, and prevented any on the part of his own soldiers by the issue of rigorous orders—the death penalty for entry into the harem of a Mussulman, for scaling the wall of a house, for firing at pigeons, for disturbing the inhabitants in the mosques or at the baths. Menou went discreetly to work in disarming the population, and his maintenance of discipline among the five or six hundred men of his small garrison was all the more meritorious since his force was made up of elements borrowed from different corps, had received no pay, and lacked everything.

The generals showed the same faithfulness to the principle associating the natives in local administration. Menou confirmed in their functions three inhabitants of Rosetta who were nominated by the inhabitants to replace the agents of the Mamelukes. He decorated them with sashes, made them swear fidelity to the French, and made a speech to them ;

this ceremony of investiture terminated with music and ■ salvo of musketry. Kléber took care to get on well with his native deputy, the sherif Said Mohammed el Koraïm. He added a Mussulman, nominated by the sherif, to the commission on subsistence. He instituted in Alexandria mixed patrols of French and Egyptians ; natives arrested by these patrols were to be taken before the sherif and dealt with by him in accordance with their own laws.

The same regard and consideration were shown for the indigenous auxiliaries of the French authority, and for every influential personage. Menou coquetted with the party of the 'pure Mahometans,' whose uprightness, docility, and calm he praised to Bonaparte ; he relied on their aid, and on that of the 'men out of favour with the (Mameluke) government.' Kléber ordered that arms should be presented to the Mussulman chiefs wearing the tricolor sash : 'The guard will turn out and shoulder arms, the sentry will present, and the drummer will stand ready to beat.'

The same respect was shown for the Mussulman religion and for its ministers. 'The troops,' Kléber ordered, 'are to respect the Mussulmans' mosques and their worship, and to live on good terms with them.' 'I have carried out everything,' wrote Menou, 'that you prescribed to me in regard to the muftis and imams ; religious worship is protected.'

In spite of a shortage of money which from the outset was a source of difficulties for the two generals, there was the same care for the material interests of the indigenous population. Menou had to meet the cost of expensive establishments, and of the provisioning of Alexandria and of the naval ratings ; but he contrived to avoid requisitioning, considering it impolitic. Ultimately he was forced into it, but at least he requisitioned nothing in kind without promising that it should be taken into account in connexion with tax payments. Kléber, for his part, paid wages to the native workers he employed, although forced labour had so long been a custom of the country. No administrator brought more humanity than he to his task. By an order which does him honour, he instructed the *commission des*

*substances* to come to the aid of destitute natives : ' There are in Alexandria,' he wrote in this order, ' a considerable number of men entirely without the means of subsistence, and in danger of dying from destitution if their needs should not excite your compassion. They have aroused that of the Mussulman chief ; I request, therefore, that something over a hundred ardebs of cereals may be given up to him. . . . He will distribute it among the inhabitants and will supply it even free to the poorest among them. Will you, citizens, place him in a position to exercise this act of justice and humanity, so that the arrival of the French shall not be the cause of any individual suffering.'

Their identical policy did not, however, provide equal immunity for the two generals from difficulties with the natives. At Rosetta, a peaceful little town, the inhabitants gave little cause for complaint to Menou, especially since those of them who might have been dangerous had fled before his arrival. Menou shared the view of Villiers du Terrage : he wrote to Bonaparte that ' the capture of Cairo will end by bringing over everybody to our side.' At Alexandria, Kléber was less fortunate. Since Bonaparte's departure the native population had been nervous, agitated, and ready to welcome any news unfavourable to the French ; while the principal local authority, the sherif, took every opportunity to do them disservice. On 20 Messidor (July 8th) the news was spread that the Mamelukes had returned as victors ; the responsible author of this invention was punished with a good beating. But neither this example nor Kléber's published prohibition of the spreading of panic in this way prevented further similar trouble. On 25 Messidor (July 13th), in the course of an incident which threw the whole town into panic, a Frenchman was gravely wounded and another thrown into the sea. A few days later, a mobile column sent to Damanhour was given so hostile a reception along the whole route as could only have been the result of prearrangement between the inhabitants of Alexandria and the neighbouring populations. Soon the duplicity of the sherif, Saïd Mohammed el Koraim, was manifest to Kléber

beyond all possibility of doubt. He was deposed, arrested, and taken on board a warship ; he was then transferred, in the roadstead of Aboukir, to the custody of Admiral Brueys.

Thus the first native associated with the French in their government betrayed them ; the first application in Egypt of the policy of association resulted, within less than a month, in treason. The case revealed an evil which, if it persisted, might vitiate the whole system—the disloyalty of the natives as collaborators. Taught by the daily experience he had had of this, Kléber had come to lose confidence in the efficacy of clemency, and to believe that firmness was the only means of making himself obeyed by the masses and served by their leaders. ‘ These people,’ he wrote, ‘ take every sign of goodwill that I give them as an admission of weakness, while if I show the slightest sign, I do not say of rigour, but of firmness, they are at my feet.’

The sheik El Messiri was selected to replace Koraïm as head of the native community. He showed more loyalty, or more discretion, than his predecessor, behaved correctly, and gave satisfaction to the French. He soon warned Kléber of overtures made to him by the English to induce him to commit treason ; he was complimented by Bonaparte. Kléber’s choice proved a happy one, and provided him with a native assistant less unreliable than the one of whom he had had to rid himself in a hurry.

Such was the situation at Rosetta and Alexandria when the news reached Menou and Kléber of the battle of the Pyramids and the capture of Cairo. At Rosetta the attitude of the inhabitants already left little to be desired, and the moral effect of the news is difficult to assess. But at Alexandria Bonaparte’s victory completed the work begun by the just severity of his representative. It contributed largely to stilling the unrest and the secret hostility against which Kléber had had to battle. Mussulmans of all classes, from the new sherif, the sheik El Messiri, and the aga of the janissaries, Mohammed Khorbadji el Guriani, to the humblest artisans, joined in the fête given by the general to celebrate the defeat of the Mamelukes and the entry of the French into Cairo ; sherif and sheiks came to offer con-



gratulations and to make protestations of loyalty ; in the bazaar, through the lanes of which the general went at night, all the shops were illuminated ; he was regaled with coffee and sherbet in the *cadi's* audience chamber, and complimented with a serenade of Turkish music.

From this moment the submission of Alexandria, as of Rosetta, was sufficiently solidly established not to be compromised even by the crushing defeat inflicted on August 1st, almost under the eyes of the natives of these two towns, on the French fleet in the roads of Aboukir. For a moment this naval disaster gave reason for fearing that there would be a rising in the country, combined with an attack by the English from the sea. But Kléber and Menou had no more than a shock, and there was no disturbance either at Alexandria or at Rosetta. Menou was able to express himself as ' very content with the inhabitants of the country, who will listen to reason when they hear it.' Kléber had nothing but praise for the attitude of the Alexandrians in general and the native officials in particular. A certain improvement was felt in the attitude even of the nomad population of the environs of Alexandria ; the Arabs of some of the Bedouin tribes began to bring their cattle again to the city markets.

At the two points effectively occupied in Egypt before the capital, the moral effect of the victory of the Pyramids and the capture of Cairo had, on the whole, come up to the expectation of the French. They had reason to expect no less in the territory of which they still had to gain possession—almost the whole, indeed, of the country. The occupation seemed less likely to encounter resistance now that it would be taking place after the rout of the Mamelukes. Yet in many cases it met with hostility from the natives.

As soon as it became possible to open communications between Cairo, Alexandria, and Rosetta, and liaison was established between the garrison centres disseminated in the Delta, incidents began to occur in all sorts of places. Menou was one of the first to have experience of them. Sometimes there were local risings in his province, sometimes attacks

on the couriers going to and fro on the Nile *djermes* (boats) with dispatches to or from headquarters. At first he contented himself with mild reprisals, demands for hostages, or punitive taxation. But at the end of July, after a graver outrage, he felt that an example would have to be made. At his order, two hundred men were sent to the scene of the crime; they surrounded the district, and administered justice by firing on the villagers and burning their houses. This action was brought to the notice of the inhabitants of the whole region by proclamation. 'The French must be loved and respected,' declared Menou, who considered the people under his administration 'agreeable enough, but extremely addicted to lying and double-dealing.' This example could scarcely bring him their love, and it did not assure their respect for long. About the 15th of September, in the course of a tour of his province on which he had taken with him a large civilian suite and only two hundred soldiers as escort, he was attacked with such suddenness and impetuosity that one of his civilian companions<sup>1</sup> fell into the hands of the assailants and he himself, after having a horse killed under him and making a plunge into a pool, barely escaped with his life.

Similar incidents were repeated throughout Lower Egypt as the occupation was extended. In the province of Menouf, Jullien, aide-de-camp, who had been sent by Bonaparte to Kléber, was murdered with his whole escort by the inhabitants of a village. In the same province the population of a straggling village put up an obstinate resistance to General Fugières, who overcame them only after a violent struggle. In the province of Mansourah boats were stopped and soldiers massacred. At Mansourah itself the French garrison was attacked and cut to pieces; of its 120 men only one escaped. In the province of Damietta fifteen Frenchmen travelling by boat were murdered. At Damietta itself the garrison was besieged and had great difficulty in repelling the rebels' furious assault. In this region the insurrection was almost general; it was led by Hassan Toubar, a rich

<sup>1</sup> The painter Joly, member of the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts*.

and influential landowner. Negotiations failed to disarm this redoubtable partisan, and regular military operations proved necessary in order to drive him out of the region and reduce its inhabitants to submission. In the province of Behera the nomad Arabs, aided by the fellaheen, tried to stop the flow of drinking water to Alexandria by continually damaging the canal from the Nile. Kléber had to sack and completely destroy the village which was the principal centre of these crimes. Murat in the province of Galioub, Reynier in that of Sharkieh, were exposed to constant attacks from the Bedouins, often aided by the settled population. Tantah, the most populous town in Egypt after Cairo, and the most prosperous in the Delta, entirely eluded payment of levies, and revolted on the arrival of an armed force of three hundred men, sent by Mehallet el Kebir to take hostages.

South of Cairo the province of Gizeh, nearest to the capital, was occupied without incident ; but Atfieh, the principal town of another province, was the scene of an insurrection fomented by the sheiks, and made more serious by an ambush. A curious fact was that the provinces least inhospitable to the French were those of Fayoum and Beni-Suef, where Desaix was faced by Murad Bey and considerable remnants of the army beaten at the Pyramids. ' I have been quite satisfied with Fayoum,' he wrote after the battle of Sediman ; ' the inhabitants have behaved well and received us well ; I have nothing but praise for them.' But on the whole it was for some time only rarely that Bonaparte's lieutenants could give such praise to the population of their provinces.

Why, after the defeat of the Mamelukes and the taking of Cairo, did the French continue to experience the hostility of the natives in many regions ? Because, after their victory as before it, they remained, in the eyes of the Mussulmans, infidels whose intrusion into the territory of Islam was a profanation, an insult to the faith of the Prophet. On this account they inspired an antipathy, a repulsion, which could breed hatred independently of the success of their arms ; and their prestige was not always sufficient to prevent

demonstrations of this hatred. Religious fanaticism was reinforced by the power the Mamelukes still had to excite the natives against the French. The Mamelukes had been defeated but not destroyed, and they had preserved much of their influence in the country. There was also the influence of the English, acquired through their victory at Aboukir. Thus the aversion of the Mussulman Egyptians from the Christian yoke imposed on them was encouraged to find expression in attacks on a rule which was hateful because it was that of infidels.

The moment the Egyptian population began to offer active resistance to the French occupation and to engage in hostilities, and even before their effect was felt, it was no longer possible for Bonaparte to do other than meet violence with violence. His primary aim was necessarily to secure obedience, and he was compelled to use force when gentler means failed; and the greater the number of his subjects and the more extended the territory under his authority, the less he was able to feel that he could dispense with force. By the end of July he had come to the conclusion that the interest of his policy, which at first had required indulgence, now required severity. He instructed his lieutenants to put this principle into application; where necessary, he put it into application himself. 'You must treat the Turks,'<sup>1</sup> he wrote to General Zayonchek, 'with the utmost severity; I am having three heads cut off here every day and carried round Cairo: it is the only way to break the resistance of these people.' 'The Turks,' he wrote to Menou, 'can only be kept in order by the utmost severity: every day I have five or six heads cut off in the streets of Cairo. Hitherto we have had to be gentle with them in order to destroy the reputation for terrorism that preceded us; now, on the contrary, we must adopt the tone necessary to make these peoples obey; and to obey, for them, means to fear.'

It would be a mistake to read literally the announcement

<sup>1</sup> Here, as in many other cases, the name Turk was employed by Bonaparte in the sense of Mussulman.

of these daily executions, followed by the exhibition of the heads of the victims in the streets of Cairo. The chronicle of Abderrahman Gabarti, venomously anti-French as it is, makes no mention of any such sanguinary examples. Bonaparte used to his correspondents the language he felt to be necessary in order to correct or prevent their mistakes, even if it meant exaggeration; and in this case he was manifestly exaggerating. At the time when these two letters were written, the inhabitants of Cairo had given him no reason for measures of such severity. But he was already convinced that his rule would be respected only in the measure in which it was feared, and he took steps to make it feared in the country districts in which it was not respected.

His lieutenants, responsible to him for the security of their territory, spontaneously gave orders for examples to be made or reprisals or punishments inflicted as necessitated by the acts from which they suffered. On receiving their reports, Bonaparte confined himself in some cases to approving the action taken, called in others for more severity, and at times gave orders as required for the punishment of offences which it had not been possible to punish at once.

'I am dissatisfied with the conduct of the inhabitants of Alexandria,' he wrote, and justified by this laconic verdict a whole series of rigorous measures, on top of those already adopted by Kléber—the surrender of all arms, on pain of death, to the commandant of the town; the demolition of the home of the murderer of a Frenchman; the taking of fifty hostages until the attitude of the population improved; the imposition of a levy of 300,000 francs on the merchants of the city; a fine of the same amount imposed on Said Mohammed el Koraim, to be going on with; the arrest of his subordinates and sealing of his property. Koraim was later transferred from Aboukir to Cairo, where he was tried, condemned to death, and executed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was decapitated in the citadel square on 20 Fructidor in the year VI. His head was carried round the streets of Cairo with this inscription: 'Koraim, sherif of Alexandria, condemned to death for having betrayed his oath of fidelity to the French Republic and continued his relations with the Mamelukes, for whom he served as spy. So will all traitors and perjurers be punished.'

The inhabitants of Damanhour received just punishment for their attack on a mobile column. General Brises was ordered to disarm the town; to have five notables beheaded, one of them chosen from among the lawyers and the other four from those who had the greatest influence over the populace; and to take twenty-five hostages and send them to Cairo. General Dugua was charged with the punishment of the town of Mansourah for the massacre of its French garrison; he received these instructions, which, however, he did not carry out literally: 'It is indispensable that you should make a great example and have at least nine or ten heads cut off.' General Lanusse was ordered to burn the village in which Jullien and his escort were assassinated, to confiscate all its cattle and corn, and to take its sheiks as hostages to Cairo. A group of villages between Mansourah and Damietta, where there had been many grave outrages against the French, were ordered to be dealt with severely by the generals operating in that region. The revolt of Atfieh, which had already been punished by the burning of a village, brought this letter from Bonaparte to General Rampon: 'I know too well the spirit animating the three battalions under your command to have any doubt that they would feel injured if I entrusted others with the avenging of the infamous treason of the inhabitants of Atfieh.' This incident also led to the dispatch of the Desaix division for the conquest of the southern provinces of Middle and Upper Egypt.

The sole act of rebellion left unpunished was that of the inhabitants of Tantah. This town was especially venerated by the Mussulmans and was visited by large numbers of pilgrims. 'I have learnt with regret,' Bonaparte wrote to General Fugières, 'of the happenings at Tantah. I desire that this town should be respected, and I should regard it as the utmost possible misfortune for this place, sacred in the eyes of all the East, to be ravaged. I am writing to the inhabitants of Tantah, and I am moving the General Divan to write; I desire that the whole matter should be brought to an end by negotiation.'

Except in this one case, Bonaparte hit back everywhere.

In his proclamation on arrival he had declared to the Egyptians that it was not they that he had come to fight ; but he had warned them at the same time that he would deal rigorously with any who opposed him. He kept his word. In order to make an end of sedition in the country districts, he had recourse to force. Disarming, levies in kind, the taking of hostages, individual or collective executions—such were the proceedings he enjoined on his lieutenants, in order to impose French rule on those natives who did not submit to it with a good grace. But neither the resistance he met with nor the reprisals they necessitated on his part turned him for one moment from the policy he had laid down before his departure, and had put into application on his arrival in Egypt.

## IV

### BONAPARTE AND THE EGYPTIANS

IT WAS of importance to French rule in Egypt to discover a basis of support in the people themselves, since it was not to be found among the Turks or the Mamelukes. By what means did Bonaparte try to secure this basis? As soon as he was master of Cairo, he undertook the municipal organization of the capital and the provincial organization of Egypt. The government of Cairo was entrusted to a Divan of nine members, all native. These members were the sheiks El Sadat, El Bekri, El Sherkawi, El Sawi, El Fayoumi, El Arishy, and Moussa Sirsy; the Nakib el Achraf<sup>1</sup> Saïd Omar, and Mohammed el Emir. They chose the sheik El Sherkawi as their president. Their first meeting took place on the day of the issue of the decree appointing them; they were to assemble every day, and three of them were to be in permanent attendance at the meetings. The French element was represented only by three secretaries, who, since they had to know both Arabic and French, were of necessity chosen from among the French<sup>2</sup>, and by a commissioner as delegate of the *général en chef*.

Bonaparte had, of course, no intention of denying himself the supervision of the acts of this native body; on the contrary, he reserved to himself the means of doing so. Adjutant General Beauvoisins attended every sitting and reported daily to the general-in-chief; later this duty fell to Tallien, ex-member of the Convention, as successor to

<sup>1</sup> Nakib El Achraf means head of the sherifs of Cairo.

<sup>2</sup> Citizens Caffé, Wolmar, and Baudeuf, French merchants in Cairo.

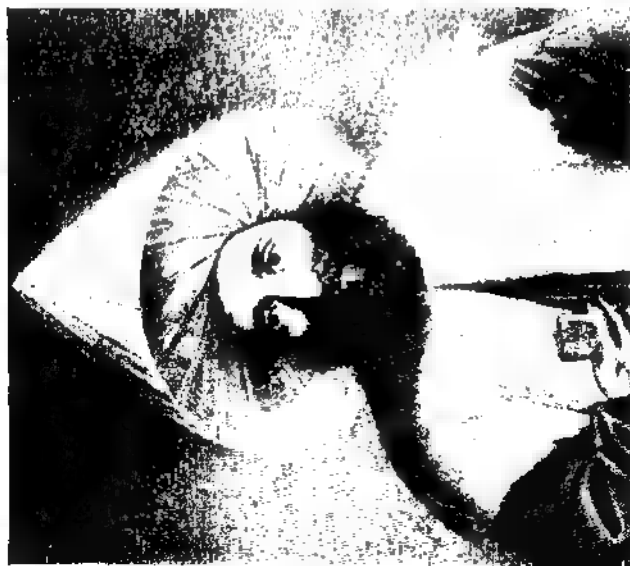


Beauvoisins in the office of French commissioner with the Divan.

The powers of the Divan were none the less real, and under the control of Bonaparte and the commandant of the city it made itself felt at once. The decree setting it up had indicated certain measures as urgently required—the appointment of two agas for administration, of a commission of three members to supervise the markets and the provisioning of the capital, and of another for burials. The aga for general administration was to report daily on the situation in the city ; the *commissaires des guerres* and departmental agents were to send all their demands to him ; ■ special official, the aga for subsistence, was to refer to him in regard to matters in his department. He was to appoint an aga for the control of Nile navigation. When two districts adjoining Cairo, Boulak and Old Cairo, were incorporated in the capital, it was he who nominated the agas of the janissaries for these two quarters.

All these native officials working under the Divan were placed, like the Divan itself, under the supervision and control of French authorities. The aga for administration in Cairo was under the general commanding in Cairo. The aga for Nile administration was under the direct authority of the rear admiral commanding river navigation. The aga for subsistence was subordinated to the *ordonnateur en chef* of the army. Initiative, supervision, and control were in the hands of the French ; the execution of orders and, on occasion, the offer of suggestions were for the natives. Such was the formula of collaboration between the two elements, in Cairo as in Alexandria, laid down by Bonaparte.

In the service of the municipal administration thus constituted there was placed a police force organized on the same basis. A Turkish corps of five companies, each with ■ strength of sixty-five men, was created. The head of this corps, and his officers, were natives ; but they were placed under the authority of General Dupuy, commanding in Cairo. Later on a sixth and a seventh company of Turks were organized for the districts of Boulak and Old Cairo.



THE AGA FOR ADMINISTRATION, CAIRO

*Drawings by Dutertre.*



THE EMIR HADJI

*Engraved by Tardieu*

*From the 'Description de l'Égypte'*



Thus measures of administration and policing were adopted with the collaboration of natives, and applied to the inhabitants by natives.

Above this active mechanism, at the summit of the hierarchy, were finally placed two high dignitaries, in two fat sinecures—the *kiaya* (lieutenant) of the pasha, Mustafa Bey, who was retained in his post, and a governor nominated by the Divan, Mohammed Aga. Their functions appear to have been entirely decorative; but their presence at the head of the administrative hierarchy retained for the government of Cairo the aspect to which the inhabitants were accustomed.

Simultaneously with the organization of Cairo, Bonaparte provided on the same principles for that of all Egypt. At the head of each province was a French general commanding; at his side a Divan of seven members, all natives, was responsible for watching over the public interests, for maintaining order among the population, for police, for the issue of public notices, and for transmitting the desires or complaints of the population to the general-in-chief. In special charge of police was an aga of janissaries, with a native armed force of sixty men. For the receipt of taxes and all revenues formerly collected for the Mamelukes, an intendant was appointed, always chosen from among the Copts (native Christians), who specialized in this field; under his orders were native subordinates as required, Copts like himself; at his side was a 'French agent' to supervise his work. Such was the essential mechanism of the provincial administration. It was the extension to all Egypt of the formula of association already applied to Cairo and Alexandria.

Thus in financial matters it was the Copts who were the native auxiliaries of the French authority. They were a Christian minority, specializing in financial affairs, in which they showed marked aptitude and, at times, an absence of scruples. For both reasons the Copts were unpopular with the Mussulman population. Bonaparte was not unaware of the fact. 'These men,' he wrote with undue severity, 'are rogues execrated in the country; but they must be treated with discretion, since they are the only ones who are familiar with the whole of the administration of the country.'

In view of their competence, which for the moment rendered them indispensable, he utilized their services in spite of their unpopularity. But he hoped at least to neutralize their defects by the supervision and control on the part of French agents to which they would be subjected.

The functions of these agents were summarized as follows : ' To supervise the conduct of the intendants of provinces ; to assure and expedite the execution of the orders of the *ordonnateur en chef* or the administrator of finances ; and to give both all useful information tending to conserve and augment the revenues of the army ; in other respects they will leave the intendants a free hand in the execution of orders.' The respective situations of these French agents and of the Copt intendants was given precise definition by Bonaparte : ' My intention is not that the intendant shall be under the French commissioner ; I am persuaded that it is necessary to leave all responsibility to the Copts, and that, until the French are more familiar with the usages and the language of the country, the Frenchman is to be there solely in order to learn the said usages, to supervise, and to be able to give all the information which may be requested. He is a sort of inspector.'

This organization, though described as temporary, lasted throughout the period of French rule in Egypt. It was inaugurated everywhere when possession was taken of a province, being promulgated at the moment of occupation and introduced immediately. Each of the generals appointed to occupy a province and take over its command received a copy of the decree setting up the new administrative régime, with instructions for its application. Organization and conquest were to be simultaneous. The same communication, with analogous instructions, was sent also to Kléber and Menou ; Alexandria and Rosetta, where they were already in command, were to be given the uniform régime common to all Egypt.

The posts thus created were at once filled. The Copts selected as intendants received their commissions, and the French agents attached to them were appointed, the day after the decree creating their posts had been issued.

No special order or decree governed the organization of the central power : it resided, in reality, entirely in the person of the general-in-chief, who possessed the widest and most absolute powers, civil and military. But part of these powers was, of course, delegated under Bonaparte's authority to departmental heads. Some of these were military officials who added civil functions to their normal ones. Berthier, chief of staff, notified, transmitted, or promulgated all governmental decisions ; Sucy, *ordonnateur en chef*, corresponded with the French agents attached to the intendants on everything concerning supplies ; Estève, paymaster general, with his representatives in the provinces, was responsible for all receipts and payments.

Apart from this military mechanism, the central organization also included special departments of an entirely civil nature. The need was felt for a civil organization, distinct from the military command, in order to assist the general-in-chief in his strictly administrative work. It was met by the institution of the Administrative Commission, composed of Monge, Berthollet, and Magallon, a valuable help to the central power in matters of civil administration. Its original mandate was already fairly complex : to have all the properties of the Mamelukes sealed, to assure the collection of all direct and indirect taxes, and to maintain in good order the national properties and stores. In these various domains it was allowed a fairly wide initiative, for it was authorized to form commissions or appoint agents to carry out its decisions, under its direction and supervision. Subsequently its mandate was further extended, most of the administrative measures decided on by Bonaparte being remitted to it either for elaboration or for putting into application. Another civil department of the central power was that of the administrator general of Egyptian finances and revenues, a post of which the creation was provided for at the time of the departure of the expedition and for which Poussielgue, who was designated for it, was brought from France. It was on him that the responsibility lay for investigating, taking over, working, and reorganizing if necessary, the Egyptian financial administration. In the end

he was given a native colleague in the shape of an intendant general, as supreme head of the provincial intendants, a Copt named Girges el Gouhary.

The central government did not at first include any native council for the whole country. Originally the Divan for Cairo was the only Egyptian collective authority with which the general-in-chief was in direct touch. But from the first Bonaparte intended to complete the system of local Divans with a General Divan, and this was done before long. As soon as the provinces had been occupied and more or less pacified, Bonaparte gave the order for an assembly of Egyptian notables to be convoked at Cairo ; later it was styled the General Divan. These notables were nominated by the commandants of provinces, and selected from among ' the persons who have most influence over the people and those who are the most distinguished in the country by their enlightenment, their talents, and the way they received the French.' The provinces of Alexandria, Rosetta, Damietta, Garbieh, Mansourah, Kelioub, Bahireh, Gizeh, Atfieh, Beni Suef, Fayoum, Minieh, Manfalout, and Guirgeh sent each one deputation ; those of Sharkieh and Menouf, two ; that of Cairo, three. Each deputation was made up of three lawyers, three merchants, three fellahs, *sheiks el beled* (village mayors), and Arab chiefs. Like the local Divan for Cairo, the General Divan for Egypt was not left entirely to itself, exempt from control and direction ; two French commissioners, assisted by interpreters from Headquarters, were to supervise its sittings and to report on them to Bonaparte. The General Divan was a purely consultative body ; its task was simply to give its opinion on a certain number of questions remitted to it for consideration by the general-in-chief ; but, as we shall see, these questions were of the first importance, and the matters on which it was consulted were by no means unworthy of a national representative body, of which it had the character.

Such were the broad lines of the political régime instituted in Egypt by Bonaparte. Never, at all events since the Turkish conquest, had the country been endowed with a governmental machine so methodically constructed or so

judiciously adapted to its needs. Simple, practical, well arranged, this mechanism was good in itself. Compared with the anarchical and disjointed feudalism of the Mamelukes, it constituted an immense advance. It also fulfilled the conditions aimed at for securing acceptance of French rule, leaving much to the native element. 'All Egyptians,' Bonaparte had declared in his proclamation on arrival, 'will be called upon to fill all offices.' The principle enunciated in these words, that of the government of the Egyptians by the Egyptians, could only pass from theory to practice in the form of a less absolute principle, that of association. In this form it had been carried into effect. Bonaparte had not retained for himself the power he had seized; he had summoned the natives to a participation which the Mamelukes had not reserved to them. The provincial Divans, the Cairo municipal Divan, and the General Divan for Egypt were true representative organs. By wisely limited applications of the representative principle, Bonaparte proposed to teach the Egyptians to make use of it.

Thus the very form given by Bonaparte to French rule seemed devised in a way that should rally the natives to it. But what is often more effective, and more rapidly effective, than the influence of political or administrative institutions, is that of the everyday acts through which the initiative of the head of a government finds expression, constituting in the aggregate what is called his native policy. 'The worst thing we had to fear on our arrival,' Bonaparte wrote to Kléber, 'was to be preceded by terror, of which there was already too much, and which would have exposed us in every shanty to scenes like those of Alexandria.' It was against this terror, and against the fixed ideas of every sort which gave birth to it, that his native policy was aimed. On the very day of his entry into Cairo he communicated in an army order this decision, which does honour to his humanity: 'The *général en chef*, having in mind that the wives of the beys and Mamelukes, if they wander in the environs of Cairo, become the prey of the Arabs, and being moved by compassion, that first sentiment which should



animate man, authorizes all the wives of beys and Mamelukes to return to the city, to the houses which are their property, and promises them safety.'

He wished the country well, and tried to bring his 'benevolent designs' to the knowledge of the people. As soon as the Cairo Divan was constituted it was requested to issue a proclamation in this sense. He had no intention of damaging material interests, and tried hard to reassure opinion. An order of his proclaimed that 'all landowners in Egypt are confirmed in their properties; pious foundations in favour of the mosques, and especially of those of Mecca and Medina, are confirmed as hitherto; all civil transactions will continue to take place as hitherto; civil justice will be administered as hitherto.' Private property and entailed estates were thus guaranteed against dispossession; nothing was changed in civil legislation or in the administration of justice. Nor was any change made, at any rate for the moment, in the nature or the amount or proportioning of taxation. There was merely a transfer of revenue from the Mamelukes to the French Republic, and from the former farmers of taxes to a regular tax-collecting administration. Save for these two changes, of which the former made little difference to the taxpayers and the latter probably benefited them, the fiscal régime, in regard to which the suspicions of the native are so easily awakened, was subjected to no change.

Bonaparte did not confine himself to reassuring property owners and guaranteeing them against legislative injustice; he also protected them against individual excesses and illegal violence. He saw to it that his soldiers should respect the persons and the property of the natives and the women of the country; if ever any of them failed in their duty he recalled them to it. Every incident that came to his notice was publicly punished. The native was effectually protected not only against malevolence or dishonesty but against high-handedness or negligence on the part of the soldiers, who were held responsible for all damage caused by their default.

In filling the administrative posts reserved to natives,

Bonaparte had recourse not only to the most competent but also to the most respected and most influential persons. The Mamelukes had been suspicious of the religious personages, the sheiks, sherifs, muftis, and ulema, often of ancient Arab family, who constituted a sort of native aristocracy, and had systematically kept them out of public employment. Bonaparte, on the contrary, sought their support, as leaders alike 'of religion, of justice, and of the nobility,' and chose them to fill the posts he created. It was from their ranks that he filled the membership of the Cairo Divan; all its members were held in esteem by their fellow-citizens on account of their power, their position, their culture, or their descent: some of them, like the sheiks El Bekri and El Sadat, were of the line of the Prophet. 'The wisest, the best informed, the most virtuous shall govern,' said Bonaparte in his proclamation on arrival; and he kept his word.

Bonaparte had thus provided himself with native auxiliaries, and had of set purpose chosen respected and influential ones; and he tried to turn their credit with the people to the profit of the French rule. To this end it was not enough that he had invested them with an authority the Mamelukes had denied them, as authority for which they found themselves indebted to the victory of the infidels. He tried also to make them his friends, working on their self-respect, their vanity, or their interest, showing them consideration, flattering them, and cajoling them in every way. Members of the Divan and agas of the janissaries were exempted from requisitions, and were allowed to travel on horseback. The general-in-chief showed by his own example the consideration with which he required civil and religious dignitaries to be treated (as a rule the civil and religious functions were inextricably intermingled). Here is his own account of the way he received the muftis and sheiks of the mosque of El Azhar at Headquarters (their head, the sheik El Sherkawi, was also president of the Divan):

'The Ezbekieh square was entirely filled with their following. They arrived on their richly caparisoned mules, surrounded by their servants and by a large number of

bodyguards. The French guards shouldered arms and rendered them the highest honours. On their arrival in the halls, they were received with respect by the aides de camp, who had sherbet and coffee brought to them. A few moments later the general entered, sat down with them, on the same divan, and endeavoured to inspire them with confidence by discussions on the Koran, asking for explanations of the principal passages, and showing great admiration for the Prophet.' Bonaparte never missed an opportunity of conferring some new dignity on one or other of these Mussulman notables, or of accompanying the investiture of it with all possible pomp.

Nor was the material side neglected; all public employment was well remunerated. In order to make the native officials in the provinces, as in Cairo, appreciate the advantages of their position, they were allowed good salaries. The first to be fixed were those of the members, secretaries, interpreters, and gentlemen ushers of the Divans of Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta, and those of the agas in command of companies of janissaries in these three towns. A little later the salaries of the corresponding officials in the other occupied provinces were laid down. The janissaries were given daily pay.

Soon further posts were created, again reserved for natives; and repeated applications on a more and more extended scale of the principle of association, the fundamental principle of Bonaparte's policy, considerably increased the numbers of his Oriental dependants. The command of Suez and of the province of Atfieh was given to two Mussulmans, Ibrahim Aga and Hassan Khorbadji, who were both raised to the rank of major; each of them was entrusted with the organization of a native company commanded by officers and n.c.o.'s of the same origin as the soldiers. The men of these two units were not given uniforms, and were merely required to wear the tricolour cockade; each unit was given a tricolour flag on which was inscribed, in French on one side and in Arabic on the other, 'a sentence from the Koran and an imprecation against the Mamelukes.' At Cairo a 'Turkish company' of foot-

soldiers was created, attached to the French corps of Guides ; its command was given to the janissary Omar, who was promoted captain. The uniform of this unit consisted of 'the blue Egyptian shirt, with green facings and collar and Turkish turban.'

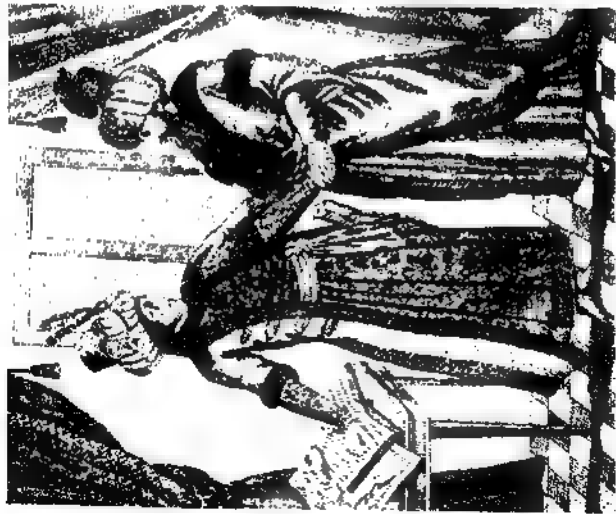
This was simply the extension to the military order of the principle of association already applied by Bonaparte to the civil and police organizations. The natives were admitted, in their own dress, to the service of the French flag as officers and men, in special auxiliary units—a first adumbration of the turcos and zouaves of later days. Bonaparte even went so far as to open the ranks of the French military units to them : under his order 'all young Mamelukes of more than eight and less than sixteen years of age' were incorporated in the army, and all the boys, black or white, within the same age limits who had been slaves of the Mamelukes. This, no doubt, was in order to rid Cairo of a body of idle and turbulent youngsters who had no means of subsistence. But in creating these native units, as in enrolling Mamelukes in the army, Bonaparte also aimed at winning over the warlike elements of the Egyptian population by the material satisfactions and the pride of the profession of arms, and assimilating them by military discipline.

Bonaparte set himself to gain acquaintance with the manners and customs, character and mental processes of this population, so different from the western peoples with whom he had had to do until then ; and his success was all the greater since not only his curiosity but his sympathy had been aroused. His quick and lively imagination had been struck at once, even captivated, by the picturesqueness of the people's costumes, and the strangeness of types and attitudes and manners. We find him, in the midst of his preoccupations, which might well have absorbed him, ordering the painter Rigo to make drawings of the native dress and portraits of the most representative personages of each race or class of the population. He was a real pioneer in his taste for 'local colour,' before the phrase and the vogue had been invented ; and also in his interest in the

native 'mentality,' another word which dates from a later day. He exercised his faculties of observation both on the appearance and on the social qualities of the inhabitants of Egypt, and the precision, the exactitude of his impressions is revealed in the way he excelled, when recalling in later years his memories of his Oriental epic, in reproducing in vivid sketches the physiognomy, the gestures, and the language of his Egyptian interlocutors.

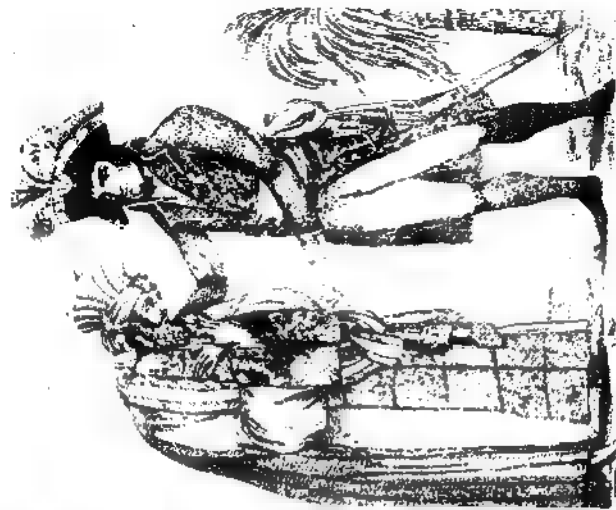
In his relations with the natives, Bonaparte took careful account of all he observed, less as a dilettante than for practical and realist purposes of policy. In his daily contact with them, guided by Frenchmen like Magallon and Venture de Paradis who were already familiar with the East, he himself conformed to their customs and way of living, receiving his guests in accordance with the etiquette of Oriental hospitality, sitting in their midst, like them, '*à la turque*,' curbing his natural impatience amid the leisureliness of their discussions and the desultoriness of their thought, talking to them in language analogous to their own, and borrowing from their style the images and figures introduced into his own. Filled with the idea of his rôle as an Oriental sovereign, he tried to give his government the patriarchal character which, even amid the magnificence with which they surround themselves and the brutality that inspires them, is preserved by most exotic governments. He knew how to display on state occasions sufficient pomp not to be outdone by the Mamelukes, but he remained accessible to everyone, and easily approached by complainants or petitioners, of whom there were many at his audiences. He took no umbrage at the crowd coming at times to demonstrate beneath his windows, and he opened the gates of Headquarters to deputations of poor people.

His models seem to have been those Abbasid or Fatimite khalifs whose splendour he dreamed of resuscitating in the Nile valley, and whose memory he liked to recall to educated Egyptians; and under his nickname of Sultan Kebir, in his Arab palace, surrounded by his native counsellors in robe and turban, he almost seemed to be one of them.



BONAPARTE AND THE PASHA  
OF CAIRO

*After a coloured engraving of the period.  
H.L.H. Prince Napoleon's collection*



THE TRICOLOUR SASH GIVEN BY  
NAPOLEON TO AN EGYPTIAN BEY

*Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale,  
Paris*



The illusion was destroyed only by his military bearing, his square embroidered jacket with the tricolour sash, and his black gold-laced hat. But did not Bonaparte, in his aspirations to orientalism, try to exchange his French uniform for Oriental clothing? The English caricature representing him dressed as a pasha was not entirely beside the truth. There was an occasion on which he put on Turkish dress, proposing to receive the members of the Divan in that style; he only changed out of it on the urgent advice of Tallien.<sup>1</sup> This may have been no more than a whim, but it was symptomatic of his inclination to orientalize himself, to adapt himself to the country of which he had become *de facto* sovereign.

In any case, when the time came for renewing the uniforms of his soldiers, it cannot have been by a mere whim that Bonaparte pronounced in favour of a uniform resembling the oriental dress. He gave way only when his generals unanimously objected that their men preferred French uniform. If it had depended entirely on him, the army of the Republic would have been transformed, more or less, into the image of the Oriental warriors whom they had conquered, and would have taken on the aspect which climate and tradition had assigned to African troops.

These are but secondary details, but they throw light on Bonaparte's original conception of the mutual relations between French and Egyptians. He conceived their relations as a sort of exchange of external concessions, which would reduce the manifest differences and end, perhaps, by diminishing the essential distance between them—a sort of marriage of East and West, effected first in dress and emblems, and then gradually in customs and ideas.

But when this conception came up against similar prejudices on both sides, he did not insist on imposing it either on Egyptians or on French. Just as he gave way to

<sup>1</sup> The fact is reported by Detroye, an officer of the Engineers, then attached to General Caffarelli. Detroye adds: 'His aide de camp, Eugène Beaubarnais, son of *Citoyenne* Bonaparte, frequently wore Turkish dress with the turban of the Franks.'



Tallien or to his generals, he shut his eyes to the native breaches of the decree requiring the wearing of the tricolour cockade and the hoisting of the tricolour flag on minarets and masts. He had set out to impose these obligations while in Alexandria, and had renewed his order after entering Cairo. An Arab historian has related, probably in a highly dramatized form, the resistance with which the order was met. Bonaparte, he writes, presented with his own hands to the sheik El Sherkawi, president of the Cairo Divan, three ribbons of blue, white, and red silk, himself fixing them on his breast; the sheik tore them off and threw them on the ground in the presence of the *général en chef*, who turned pale with rage. The sheik Sadat wore the emblem in Bonaparte's presence, but threw it away on leaving Headquarters. All Egyptians, from the highest to the lowest, regarded the wearing of the cockade as contrary to the law of the Prophet, and shunned it; at most they put it on when going into the presence of the general-in-chief, but took it off on departing. When he saw this, Bonaparte wisely decided to let his order become a dead-letter.

The affair caused a good deal of indignation in the villages round Cairo, and at Headquarters it was thought fit to publish a statement that the *général en chef* had the last word, that Camille Desmoulins' prediction, 'the tricolour cockade will go round the world,' was not to be gainsaid, and that the incident would provide in Egypt ■ 'triumph of reason over prejudice.' But an account compiled by witnesses of the expedition attests Bonaparte's tolerance in the matter: 'During the first days after the issue of the decree, some commandants employed force to induce the inhabitants to wear the cockade; they insisted that the tricolour flag should be hoisted above the minarets of Cairo and the provinces, the fortresses, and the *djermes* employed for Nile navigation. But gradually the severity diminished; and the order was issued for it to cease. The three colours still floated above the public buildings; but no further moral violence was exercised against individuals.' For the tricolour cockade to go round the world, it was sufficient for it to be worn by the French soldiers; there

was no need for the Egyptians' shirt-fronts to show it.

Bonaparte had confidence in the native policy he had outlined, the system of government and administration he had forged. 'All is going perfectly well here,' he wrote to the Directory on 22 Fructidor in the year VI (September 8th, 1798). 'The country has submitted and is beginning to grow accustomed to us. The rest is a matter of time. All the institutions which can hasten progress are at work.'

For the first time in his career, then still short, Bonaparte was governing a whole country. He was not only in command of an army; he was carrying on the government of a conquered territory, in which his authority was virtually that of the head of a state. His powers were, in fact, sovereign, since the metropolis which delegated them to him was all but cut off from communication with him. His duties called for a much more diverse activity than he had had occasion for in the past. The new position he had assumed threw up traits in his character which until then had not been evident. Through the working of circumstances the leader in him changed to the master. It is not to 1802 but to 1798-1799 that the moment should be attributed when

*Déjà Napoléon perçait sous Bonaparte*

—'Already Napoleon was looming through Bonaparte.' Napoleon was looming during the year in Cairo, owing to the accretion of responsibilities and to a situation which had no precedent in the brief annals of the Republic.

The natives under his administration were in reality his subjects. It did not displease him that some people, probably in order to flatter him, called him Sultan Kebir. This sovereign title, corresponding to his sovereignty *de facto*, sounded agreeably in his ears; in later days he still recalled it with pleasure, after having had for twelve years, and in earnest, the title of Emperor of the French. The principal sheiks attended his morning audience several times a week; in military language that is known as reporting,

but he was no longer only military, and called it coming to the levée. Not that he introduced court usages into his Headquarters—on the contrary, he surrounded himself there and on his visits with less pomp than did Kléber. But his way of regarding himself, of conceiving his rôle and rank, was naturally determined by the situation in which he found himself.

The French were not his subjects, and certainly none clearly foresaw that they would be in a few years. But the most perspicacious, watching with curiosity the development of his personality, were beginning to feel that it might carry him beyond the limits of a purely military career. There were some who took all the more pains to bind up their future with his fortunes. Rarer were those who took exception openly or secretly to elements in his nature that shocked or disquieted them. No one watched him more mistrustfully or with less sympathy than Kléber, who made entries in a pocket book that were the reverse of benevolent. 'Is he loved? How should he be? He loves no one. But he imagines that he can make up for that by promotions and presents.' The jealous independence of the Alsatian general noted 'toadying, tale-bearing, espionage,' in the entourage of the Corsican—clearly too dark a picture. 'Is he vicious?' Kléber asks in another place. 'No, but that is because vices come from stupidity and he is not stupid.' The subordinate had eyes for the suddenness of decision, the empiricism, and the fatalism of this leader, with his powerful originality: 'Never a fixed plan; every thing goes by fits and starts. Each day determines its own business. He claims to believe in fate.' One day Bonaparte, whose chessboard was the world and his pieces its nations, scandalized Kléber by saying: 'For my part—and I am playing with history——' There were no bounds to his audacity: 'he is daring at all times,' a feature that made Bonaparte 'an extraordinary man'; Kléber concedes that he is that. Finally, he showed such ardour, such self-confidence and personal initiative in his civil task that Kléber attributed them to inexperience, in which he saw the cause of all the difficulties met with by the nascent

### *Bonaparte and the Egyptians*

administration : ' He has no knowledge of organization or administration, and yet he organizes and administers, in his determination to do everything. Hence the muddles, the waste in every direction ; hence the absolute destitution, the want actually in the midst of plenty.' This judgment is cryingly unjust ; it is denied by the whole history of Bonaparte's Egyptian proconsulate.

## V

### *BONAPARTE AND ISLAM*

OF ALL the springs of native emotion, irrational religious excitement, awakened by measures to all appearance entirely innocent, was the one which was liable to give rise to the greatest difficulties for the invader. 'Those political writers,' wrote Napoleon, 'who have been the best observers of the genius of the peoples of Egypt, have regarded religion as the principal obstacle to the establishment of French authority. "To establish ourselves in Egypt," said Volney in 1788, "it will be necessary to sustain three wars—the first against England, the second against the Porte, and the third and most difficult of all against the Mussulmans who form the population of the country."' In the first of these three wars fortune was already turning against Bonaparte; he hoped to avoid the second, but saw a menace of it in Turkey's silence; he was the more anxious to prevent the third. The central purpose of his native policy was to belie Volney's prediction by working on all the causes which might alienate the inhabitants of Egypt from him; and to work more particularly on one of these causes, the most important of all, was the object of one part of his native policy, which deserves special treatment—his religious policy.

No European colonizer ever met Islam in a more tolerant, even deferential, and sympathetic spirit. No ulterior motive of Christian proselytization, no denominational prejudice influenced Bonaparte against the Mussulmans. They did not incur through their religion either his aversion or his contempt. He was still too thoroughly imbued with the ideas propagated by the French Revolution, too detached

from the Catholic church, too prejudiced against the Papacy, to think ill of the followers of Islam for being strangers to the Christian faith. But he was also too spiritualistic, too deist in the spirit of his day, even too religious in the spirit of all ages, to reproach them for being convinced believers, professing and practising, in a religion with its own dogmas and worship. Their profound faith, their piety, and the essential dogma of their theology, that of the oneness of God, ran counter to no philosophic opinion of his. He respected their faith; his conception of divinity was closer to the unitarian dogma of Islam than to the trinitarian dogma of the various Christian confessions. As the founder of a religion, as a leader of peoples, and as a lawmaker, Mahomet aroused his admiration. The story and the dogma of the Prophet had early awakened his interest; he had studied the history of the Arabs<sup>1</sup> long before he dreamed that his fortune would lead him to Egypt; he had also read the Koran, a copy of which figured in his library during this campaign, alongside other religious books.<sup>2</sup> Islam exerted over his imagination an attraction dating from before the Egyptian expedition; its attraction was intensified during the expedition and outlasted it. During his captivity he liked to send his thoughts back to the Mussulman world, and in his dictation and his conversations at St. Helena there are some of the most impartial and some of the most sympathetic pages ever written on Islam in a Western language.

To convince the Mussulmans of Egypt of the benevolence of his intentions, genuine as it was; to declare and prove it to them—this was the essence of Bonaparte's religious policy. Never did a European colonizer have better intentions or more publicly and categorically declare them, or furnish more numerous or more unanswerable proofs of them.

Declarations and proofs, words and acts began with

<sup>1</sup> Among his youthful manuscripts has been found a summary of the Abbé de Marigny's history of the Arabs.

<sup>2</sup> The Old and New Testaments; the Vedas; Mythology.

Bonaparte's arrival in Egypt. In his first proclamation to the Egyptians he vehemently denied having come to destroy the Mussulman religion ; he protested his respect for Allah, the Prophet, and 'the Alkoran' ; implicitly he placed on record his adhesion to Islam, by claiming that he and his soldiers should be considered as true Mussulmans ; he made much of his suppression of the Order of Malta and also, not without cynicism, took credit for the harshness of the Republic toward the Holy See ; and he sought shelter under the ancient alliance between France and the Ottoman Porte. As he himself wrote to the Directory, his house at Alexandria was constantly filled with imams, cadis, sherifs, and muftis. He entered into a written engagement with them to have their religion and worship respected, and he kept his word : he imposed respect on his soldiers. Prayers in due form continued everywhere as usual. On entering Cairo he renewed the same assurances and gave evidence of the same solicitude for 'the religion of the Prophet, which I love.'

These precautions did not overcome the suspicion and hostility inspired by the French, as infidels, in the majority of the Mussulmans of Egypt. They undoubtedly contributed to the calming of opinion in Alexandria, Rosetta, and Cairo ; but in the rest of the country the natives placed no faith in the promises made by proclamation, and, without waiting to see whether they were borne out by the acts of the French, persisted in regarding the invaders as enemies of Islam. The French, said Napoleon, were only tolerated 'by the Faithful, who had been dazed by the rapidity of events and had bowed to force, but openly deplored the triumph of the idolaters and mourned the disgrace brought on the first key of the Holy Kaaba.'<sup>1</sup> This feeling, ■ sort of religious repulsion, was the main inspiration of the insurrections in the country, and even at points where order was maintained it remained a permanent element of danger. Hostility, even treason, toward the 'infidel' French was

<sup>1</sup> On account of its proximity to the holy cities of Medina and Mecca, Egypt is called by the Mussulmans the first key of the Holy Kaaba.



DOUBLE PROFILE OF BONAPARTE IN THE 'PETIT  
CHAPEAU' AND IN A TURBAN

*Cabinet des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*





regarded as meritorious and a title to fame, even by those whom prudence kept from active disloyalty. When Said Mohammed el Koraïm, the sherif of Alexandria who had behaved treacherously to Kléber, was taken from Aboukir to Cairo, the inhabitants of Rosetta, who had given Menou no cause for complaint, hurried to set eyes on the prisoner and acclaim him. A war from which few European conquerors in Islamic countries have escaped was preached by the imams and was brewing in Egypt—the Holy War. ‘Volney’s prediction was to come true,’ Bonaparte wrote later. The situation amounted to a dilemma: ‘We had either to re-embark, or to conciliate the religious ideas, to escape from the anathemas of the Prophet, and to prevent being classed among the enemies of Islam.’ But experience showed that in order to be classed among the friends of Islam it was not enough to declare one’s friendship. However sincere the declaration, the protestations of friendship of an infidel would always be suspect. The only declarations that had any chance of being listened to by the masses were those of the Mussulman religious leaders, authorizing and ordering obedience to the French. ‘We had to convince and win over the muftis, the ulema, the sherifs, and the imams, so that they should interpret the Koran in favour of the army.’

There was a mosque in Cairo which united with the character of a venerated sanctuary that of a Mussulman university of high repute throughout Islam—the mosque of El Azhar. In the past, in the time of the Khalifs, there had been crowded within its walls more than 12,000 students, coming not only from Egypt but from all parts of the Mussulman world—Turks from Europe and Asia; Maugrabins from Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco; Persians; inhabitants of Samarkand and Bokhara; Indians, Abyssinians, Soudanese, and so on. Subsequently the number of students sank to about 1200, and the teaching, which formerly had been extensive, was restricted to the Koran and the rudiments of knowledge and to literary Arabic. But, even in its decline from its ancient splendour, El Azhar had remained one of the most active centres of the teaching of the Koran, one

of the centres from which the Islamic faith radiated over the world, and had continued to shelter Mussulmans of very diverse race and origin. The masters who instructed this motley assemblage of youth were regarded as teaching the pure doctrine, and enjoyed special moral authority. Thus the sheiks of the ' Sorbonne of El Azhar,' as Bonaparte called it, could do more than those of any other mosque to counter or further his policy.

He turned to these sheiks to obtain a 'fetwa,' an interpretation of the Koran, which could buttress his power. 'To obtain from these religious notables a declaration in favour of the French would be a moral victory which would complete that of the Pyramids.' So he and his entourage thought, rather deceiving themselves. He used to like to tell later of the patient effort by which he ultimately obtained a sort of investiture, which he imagined to be ■ decisive victory.

The muftis of the four Islamic sects<sup>1</sup>, who had become the principal collaborators in his administration and auxiliaries of his authority, made a practice, together with the sheiks of El Azhar, of going frequently to Headquarters. Bonaparte took advantage of each visit to turn the conversation to religion and enter into regular theological discussions. In this school he soon became a sort of *thaleb* or theological student, expert in this type of controversy. Profiting by his own victories, he embarrassed his interlocutors by quoting to them passages from the Koran in which his arrival from the West on the banks of the Nile was predicted. Could he have defeated the Mamelukes without the protection of Allah and Mahomet, and would this protection have been granted to him if the Mamelukes had not deserved ■ and he deserved well of Allah and Mahomet? When he felt that the sheiks and muftis had been sufficiently wheedled and edified, he began to complain of the imams who were fomenting war in the provinces. Finally, one day, he sprang ■ request on ten of them who had shown the most confidence in him :

<sup>1</sup> The four sects of the Sunnite branch of Islam are the Shafites, Malikis, Hanbalites, and Hanafis.

‘What I need is a fetwa from Gama el Azhar, ordering the people to take the oath of obedience.’

The sheiks were taken aback and rather alarmed, but they did not take long to discover a loophole. Since he was so fervent an admirer of Mahomet and attributed his military successes to the protection of the god of Islam, why did he not turn Mussulman, with all his army? They would then have no scruple about describing him to the people as God’s messenger and the friend of the Prophet, and their summons would be listened to: Egyptians and Arabs would flock to his flag.

Now it was Bonaparte’s turn to be embarrassed. No doubt the sheiks’ suggestion was simply a subterfuge, but it was no less awkward for that. The question of his relations with Islam had been carried so far that now it had become one of his conversion, as a necessary condition of the investiture he was claiming. Later, in recalling this strange negotiation, Bonaparte expressed various opinions as to the action open to him and the course to which he was personally inclined. Sometimes he claimed that if he had undergone conversion his army would have followed his example; sometimes he recognized that he never could have done it; sometimes, paraphrasing Henri IV’s ‘Paris is worth a mass,’ he would exclaim: ‘Is it conceivable that the eastern empire and perhaps the subjection of all Asia would not have been worth pantaloons and a turban?’ In reality it seems beyond doubt that the army would not have agreed to mass conversion, and that Bonaparte was not in the least inclined to give the signal for it. It was thus purely for tactical reasons that when this unexpected proposal was put before him he decided to play with it rather than reject it outright.

There were, he replied, two objections to his army and himself becoming Mussulmans—circumcision and the prohibition of wine. Moreover, before there could be any question of conversion it would be necessary to give the troops time to become acquainted with the dogmas and practices of Islam, and that would take two years. For his own part, he was convinced of the excellence of the

religion of Mahomet, and he promised to have a mosque built that would be half a league round and capable of holding his entire army. But even this promise did not win the day for him. After some time spent in deliberation, the four muftis brought Bonaparte a fetwa they had drawn up and signed. It generously absolved the French soldiers from circumcision, but not from the prohibition of wine. Between the army and the paradise of Allah there still stood the bottle. On the proposal of one of the sheiks of El Azhar, the fetwa was then reduced to its first part, that which exempted the French from the ' Mussulman baptism ' and agreed to their assimilation to followers of Mahomet ; and, thus truncated, it was at once proclaimed in all the mosques. As for the second part, the muftis submitted it to fresh consideration and referred the question to Mecca. Finally they brought Bonaparte a fetwa interpreting the Koran in favour of the soldiers' customs in the matter of wine also. Thus completed, ' the declaration in favour of the French was proclaimed from the minarets of the great mosque, and soon the muezzins of the lesser mosques were reciting it to the people at the hour of prayer.'

Must we take it that, as some have affirmed, ' from this moment there was entire confidence ' ? It would be going too far to do so. The truth seems to have been told on this point by a Turkish chronicler, a Christian, when he declares that the ulema were never convinced by Bonaparte's professions of faith, and saw in them nothing but a pretence made from interested motives. Neither the sheiks nor the people ceased to regard the French as strangers to their faith. Even the detachment shown by the general-in-chief and the whole army toward Catholicism could do nothing to relieve them of the character of infidels, which could only be effaced by conversion. Thus it was of relatively little help that ' the army,' as Napoleon said later, ' had not attended the churches in Italy and did not attend them in Egypt,' and that ' every external trace of Christianity, indeed, every religious habit, had disappeared from its ranks.' Even though detached from Catholicism, the French and their leader still remained infidels. At best they could only

be given some credit for their evident tolerance as infidels, and their manifest good intentions toward the followers of the Prophet.

Bonaparte did his utmost to earn this credit through his actions. Officers of the Engineers had disturbed some tombs in building fortifications : they were reprimanded, the works stopped, the tombs restored, and the muftis authorized to proceed with the customary rites. There had been maladministration of the rich endowments of the mosque of Sultan Hassan : Bonaparte, on learning of it, went unannounced to the mosque at the hour of prayer, sent for the imams, upbraided them, and ordered an inquiry, the upshot of which was that the double-dealers had to give up their illicit gains. The time came for the return of the pilgrims from Mecca and Medina. Bonaparte attached extreme importance to enabling their caravan to come to Cairo as in other years. In transmitting to Berthier the order setting up the Cairo Divan, he wrote to him : ' Your first care this evening will be to see that the Divan writes to the caravan to tell it that it can come without fear.' He knew the place this annual pilgrimage held in the religious life of Islam, and appreciated the injury that would be done to French rule in Egypt if it could be said that it brought any disturbance to the accomplishment of this sacred duty. The Mussulmans in Egypt were not the only ones concerned : those of Tripolitania, of the regencies of Tunis and Algiers, and of the Moroccan Empire, made use of Egyptian territory to gain access to the holy cities and return from them ; and those of Medina and Mecca profited greatly from this annual afflux. The reputation of Bonaparte's government throughout north Africa and in the Hedjaz would thus depend on whether he put obstacles in the way of the pilgrims or provided facilities for them.

It was partly in order to safeguard the return to Cairo of the pilgrims from Mecca that Bonaparte took steps at once to keep open the approaches to the capital from south and east. By the beginning of August the pilgrims, divided into several groups, were but a short distance from Cairo ; some of them had already arrived. As soon as they began to

appear, Bonaparte gave orders for them to be given a good welcome. Thus a first contingent, detached from the principal caravan, was received at the end of July. This contingent was followed on August 3rd by a troop of pilgrims belonging to Tripoli, who camped at Boulak, on the banks of the Nile. But the principal caravan, under the leadership of the Emir Hadji<sup>1</sup>, Salik Bey, was reported to be in the environs of Belbeis, north-east of Cairo, and in danger of falling into the hands of Ibrahim Bey, who was on the move in this region with his Mamelukes. Through military operations lasting a fortnight, Bonaparte drove Ibrahim Bey into Syria; but unfortunately he failed to prevent him from carrying off the Emir Hadji in his flight. The main part of the caravan, at all events, reached Belbeis and was sent on to Cairo under armed escort; the pilgrims made their entry into the city preceded by French bands. But the richest of them, the moneyed men, had feared being fleeced by the French, and had preferred to take the risk of being flayed by the Arabs; they followed Ibrahim Bey and the Emir Hadji into the desert. They had cause to regret their choice, for the Arabs took their money, their baggage, and their mounts, and left them stranded in a state of terrible distress. Bonaparte not only rescued them from the plight into which they had brought themselves, by sending troops in search of them, but had the robbers pursued and captured, and the booty restored to the imprudent pilgrims, who hastened to join the earlier convoys in Cairo.

While protecting the pilgrims returning from Mecca to Cairo, Bonaparte made provision for the departure of the next pilgrimage to Mecca. Tradition required that the civil authority should designate the leader of the next caravan a long time in advance; the leader's task was to organize his convoy. On 16 Fructidor (September 2nd) Bonaparte invested Mustapha Bey, ex-kiaya of the pasha of Egypt, with the functions of Emir Hadji. He personally carried out the investiture, in the presence of the Divan, placing on Mustapha Bey the green pelisse with white fur trimmings and lining. The new Emir Hadji was presented with a

<sup>1</sup> 'Chief of the pilgrims'—title given to the leader of the caravan.

diamond-studded aigrette and conducted to his home on a richly caparisoned horse given to him by the general-in-chief, escorted by aides de camp and saluted with six guns, which the batteries of the citadel answered. At Bonaparte's request the news of the appointment was communicated to the sherif of Mecca and to the Barbary powers—that is to say, the beys of Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers—by a letter from the sheiks and ulema of Cairo.

For Bonaparte had realized from the first the extraordinary cohesion of the Mussulman world, the remarkably close interconnexion, in spite of distances and in spite of seas and deserts, between the various elements of that community. He knew that if his rule was accepted in Egypt it might still be menaced by excitement introduced from abroad. His religious action, moreover, and his Mussulman policy, would have repercussions beyond the limits of Egypt, at Constantinople, the seat of the Khalifate, at Mecca, the religious centre of Islam, in Syria, in Tripolitania, and along the whole north coast of Africa as far as Morocco. Bonaparte sought recognition by all the powers governing these countries, as a friend and protector of Islam. He had already sent a letter at the beginning of August to the French consul at Tripoli requesting him to assure the bey of that regency that 'his subjects will be specially protected in Egypt.' A fortnight later he wrote again to the consul to request him to inform the bey that the festival of the Prophet would be celebrated in Cairo with the utmost pomp, that the Tripolitan caravan was setting out well satisfied with its treatment at the hands of the French, that succeeding caravans would enjoy the same protection, and that the Emir Hadji had been nominated. He arranged for these two letters to be transmitted to their destination, the consul's reply to be brought back, and a more frequent exchange of correspondence between Egypt and Tripolitania to be established, through the good offices of the leader of the Tripolitan pilgrims, the sheik Abu el Cassim, with whom Venture, the Headquarters interpreter, concluded an agreement.



Still more important in Bonaparte's eyes than the line taken by the bey of Tripoli was that taken by the spiritual and temporal leader reigning at Mecca under the title of sherif. The policy of the Porte had always been to do everything to diminish the religious influence of this vassal of the sultan. Bonaparte's policy was just the opposite of this: he aimed at increasing the prestige of the sherif, Ghalib—whose needs placed him in economic dependence on Egypt—and at intensifying the commercial, political, and religious relations with him, so as to assure his goodwill in return for advancing his interests and satisfying his *amour-propre*. Bonaparte wrote twice to him, at an interval of two days. He declared his firm intention of doing everything to protect the pilgrims to Mecca and to secure to the holy cities the ownership of the mosques and foundations they possessed in Egypt; 'we are friends,' he wrote, 'of the Mussulmans and of the religion of the Prophet; we want to do everything possible to please you and serve religion.' In his second letter he renewed these protestations and announced the nomination of the Emir Hadji.

No doubt, however, he feared that the word of an infidel would be suspect to so holy a personage. He was concerned, therefore, that Mussulmans and religious authorities should undertake toward the sherif of Mecca to be guarantors of the arrangements he announced. This was the purpose of the letter he caused to be written by the sheiks and ulema of Cairo. This letter, dispatched on 20 rabi-el-ewel 1213 (15 Fructidor—September 1st), was a recital of Bonaparte's victories over the Mamelukes, an apologia for his proceedings toward the Mussulman religion, and an enumeration of the many evidences of good will which he and his soldiers had given since their arrival in Egypt. Bonaparte and the French were given honour for the dissolution of the Order of Malta and the humbling of the power of the Pope; and homage was rendered to their Mussulman orthodoxy, since they recognized the One God, venerated the Prophet and the Koran, and had the usual festivals celebrated. Though the letter was addressed to the sherif of Mecca, Bonaparte proposed to make use of it as a manifesto; for we find him

ordering Kléber to have it printed in Alexandria, sending him 600 copies and distributing 400 in the Archipelago.

Bonaparte sought the good will not only of Tripoli, Mecca, and the Archipelago, but also of Palestine and Syria. From this quarter came a more serious menace than from anywhere else. For there reigned at Acre, as a quasi-independent sovereign over the greater part of Syria and over Palestine, a pasha who had won fame by his persecutions of the French, Ahmed Djezzar Pasha. The desert of Gaza was no obstacle for the relatively numerous troops this despot could muster. If, therefore, he chose to embrace the cause of Ibrahim Bey, who had fled into his territory, or to intervene in defence of the rights of the sultan, or simply in the defence of Islam, he might be able to create serious difficulties for the French. Bonaparte accordingly hastened to reassure him in regard to his intentions. 'In coming to Egypt to make war on the beys,' he wrote, 'I have done a just thing and a thing in conformity with your interests, since they were your enemies. I have certainly not come to make war on Mussulmans. . . . At Malta I liberated 2000 Turks. . . . In Egypt I have reassured the people, and protected the muftis and imams and the mosques. The pilgrims from Mecca have never been welcomed with more friendly attentions than I have shown them; the festival of the Prophet has just been celebrated with more splendour than ever.' This letter was placed in the hands of an officer, Beauvoisins, who was instructed to declare personally to Djezzar that Bonaparte was anxious to be on neighbourly terms with him and had not the least intention of undertaking the conquest of Jerusalem, and that the Mussulmans had no greater friends than the French. The letter alone reached the pasha, who refused to receive Beauvoisins and made him re-embark for Egypt without listening to his explanations.

Another emissary, Mailly de Châteaurenaud, was sent by Bonaparte to Latakia and Aleppo, charged with a similar mission. 'We have nothing to do with those infidels of barbarian times who came to fight against your faith; we recognize its sublimity, we adhere to it, and the moment

has come when all regenerate French will also become true believers.' So wrote Bonaparte to the pasha of Aleppo in the letter of which Mailly was the bearer. Alongside these simultaneous approaches to powerful vassals of the sultan, efforts were made to influence Constantinople, the centre of the empire, and to enter into direct relations with the Sublime Porte.

The correspondence, and with it Bonaparte's Mussulman policy, thus extended virtually to the whole of Ottoman and Barbary Islam; subsequently, letters to Tippoo Sahib, Sultan of Mysore, to the Sultan of Darfur, and to the Sultan of Morocco extended both to virtually the whole of the Mussulman world, with the exception of Persia and central Asia. So extensive a correspondence, and the plan of so vast a foreign policy, plainly went beyond the immediate needs of the protection of Egypt from external menaces or influences. Independently of this defensive interest, they seem to imply a less negative purpose, the existence of which in Bonaparte's mind is revealed by other acts, and especially by certain statements made by him. The East had already appealed to his imagination during his Italian campaign, and on receiving from the Directory the mission to carry out the project of an Egyptian expedition he did not forbid his imagination to amplify his mandate. An expedition to the Indies was out of the question, though he may have had authority for it from Paris; but had he not ideas with regard to the Levant which were not limited to Egypt? The project of action in Syria, either with the good will of Djezzar if he succeeded in winning him over, or by arms if not, must in any case have been entertained from the first; no other explanation is possible of the offer made to Murad Bey at the beginning of August, 1798, of a principality in Syria if the army should extend its operations in that direction. If fortune had smiled on Bonaparte, at Acre, what development would he then have instituted in his Oriental enterprise? Was it because of the intrinsic value of Syria that he exclaimed that fortune had betrayed him at Acre? It is difficult to believe it. It seems in reality that Bonaparte saw in the conquest of Egypt the first condition and the

first phase of a vaster and more grandiose project, never elaborated in concrete detail in his mind, but aiming at creating in the eastern Mediterranean, through his transformation of that region, a formidable diversion in the conflict between republican France and monarchical Europe. Egypt would then have been for him no more than the base for an operation far more extensive than the initial expedition, and at the same time the lever with which he would raise the Mussulman world : and it would have been not only for the protection of Egypt against anti-French propaganda but also by way of preparation for his ulterior purposes that his Mussulman policy was pushed far afield, in the effort to create around his person and his fortunes an atmosphere of approval and sympathy and confidence throughout Islam.

We have just seen Bonaparte take credit in writing to the Mussulman potentates of Asia and Africa for the magnificence with which he celebrated the festival of the Prophet in Cairo. The importance he attached to the celebration of the local festivals and the care he devoted to them was one of the characteristics of his political action. The Mussulman year has many religious anniversaries in its course, each, in Egypt as in every country of Islam, the occasion of great popular festivals. And, as everywhere, local traditions had established the customs of the festivals of the country. Native life followed the rhythm of the periodical return of these public solemnities, the suppression of which was a misfortune in itself as well as an indication of serious disturbances. Bonaparte was concerned not only to keep his rule free from the stain which the abandonment of traditions so respected by the people would have left on it, but also to benefit from the popularity he might draw from an exceptional success of the festivals, heightened by the official participation of the French authorities and troops. The opportunity for this came less than a month after his entry into Cairo. The Nile, the annual flooding of which is the principal factor in the agricultural prosperity of Egypt, has always been the object of veritable worship on the part of the Egyptians ; Islam has respected this cult and has per-

petuated it in the custom of celebrating with great pomp the commencement of the inundation. The river begins to be in flood in June, and when its level reaches sixteen cubits on the *mekyas* or nilometer placed at the southern point of the island of Rodah, the dyke raised to retain the waters at the entrance of a canal crossing Cairo is broken. The breaching of the dyke and the entry of the water into this canal, the 'khalig,' are accompanied by an official ceremony and public rejoicings. When the customary date for this ceremony arrived, Bonaparte had only just returned from his expedition against Ibrahim Bey ; he had also learned the terrible news of the naval disaster of Aboukir. He had thus an additional reason for associating himself and his troops in the celebration of the 'festival of the Nile'—to counteract the effect of the defeat on the attitude of the natives and on the morale of the army.

On 1 Fructidor (August 18th), at 6 a.m., he left Cairo on horseback, surrounded by an escort in which there were intermingled in the way he liked, his generals, his general staff, the kiaya of the pasha, the members of the Divan, the mullah (who was responsible for the maintenance of the *mekyas*), the aga of the janissaries, and other native notables. Part of the garrison, under arms, lined the path along the canal ; the flotilla, dressed over all, was ranged along the banks of the Nile. The city artillery and that of the fortresses saluted the arrival of the procession at the *mekyas* and announced the completion of the strange rite of flinging into the Nile a statue of a woman as its bride. The French band joined its music to that of the Arab players while the breaching of the dyke was in progress. Bonaparte himself handed to the crew of the first vessel to enter the canal the prize it had won ; he threw handfuls of *medins* to the crowd ; he arrayed the mullah in the black pelisse, and the *nakib-redjab*, the official presiding at the distribution of the waters, in the white pelisse ; he distributed thirty-eight *kaftans* (Levantine gowns) to the principal officers ; and he witnessed the drawing up of the official report attesting the breach of the dyke and the height attained by the flood water, sixteen cubits and five digits, and returning thanks to Allah for the



THE FESTIVAL OF MAHOMET AT CAIRO

By Colin. Lithographed by C. Motte. Author's collection



benefaction. The populace, in high spirits on account of the abundance of the flood, presaging a good harvest, flocked to the scene, took part in the festival with a rough and cheerful uproar, and made a deafening escort for the *général en chef*, who regained his palace in the Ezbekieh Square amid what amounted to popular acclamations. That evening the streets of Cairo were illuminated and crowded with spectators; but most of them were Syrians, Copts, or Greeks—the Mussulmans had stayed at home.

A few days later came the anniversary of the birth of Mahomet, the occasion of festivals which normally were prolonged through four full days and nights. Bonaparte was astonished to see no signs of the commencement of preparations for the rejoicings which he knew were customary. He made inquiries, and learned from the sheik El Bekri that it was proposed to break with custom and have no celebration of the festival. Various pretexts were offered, but the real reason was ill-will toward the French. Bonaparte at once gave orders for the festival to be celebrated, himself making arrangements for adding to its splendour and personally taking part in it. On the first day (2 Fructidor—August 19th) he clothed the sheik El Bekri in the ermine pelisse attached to the dignity of *nakib el achraf* (chief of the sherifs of Cairo), vacated by the departure into exile of the last holder of the dignity. This investiture took place in the sheik's own house, in the presence of a hundred of his co-religionists squatting in a circle on the carpet, legs crossed, chaplet in hand, and swinging their bodies backwards and forwards as they recited verses from the Koran. Seated like the rest on a cushion on the floor, the *général en chef* maintained an attitude of pious meditation throughout these long litanies. When the praying was over he took part, as the sheik's guest, in a feast served *à la turque*, conforming with a good grace to the usages, a little disconcerting, of oriental meals, in which fork and knife were alike dispensed with. He then initiated himself into the charms of the chibouk (Turkish tobacco pipe), the narghileh, and Turkish coffee. In the evening, after a brilliant military parade, the general staff, preceded by a regimental band,



went by torchlight to visit the sheik El Bekri. French guns thundered in honour of Mahomet while in the city the fairy lights of the illuminations were being lit up. When night had fallen there were fireworks, no doubt the first the Egyptians had ever had the opportunity of admiring, in the Ezbekieh square. Day and night, until August 23rd (6 Fructidor), there was extraordinary animation in the streets and squares, profane gaiety mingling with pious exaltation. Bear-leaders and men with monkeys, serpent charmers, men and women dancers, thimble-riggers, conjurers, gladiators, howling and dancing dervishes, and santons or 'marabouts' in sordid rags, in turn held the attention of the amused or edified crowd.

'All these people,' Bonaparte had written to Kléber, 'might imagine that we had come in the same spirit as Saint Louis, and as they themselves when they visit Christian States.' What has been related above shows the efforts Bonaparte made to dispel that suspicion.

The festival of Mahomet was celebrated all over Egypt at the same time as in Cairo, and the same trouble was expended on it by the French authorities in all the territory occupied. At Alexandria, Kléber, 'sullen and upset,' if certain writers are to be believed, 'only reluctantly took part in this religious farce.' Willingly or not, he took part in it; for on 5 Fructidor he went with his staff officers to dine with the 'Mussulman commandant,' the sheik El Messiri. With delicate attention the sheik had him served with 'rice in three colours.' Next day Kléber had the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet celebrated with three guns, and the headquarter offices illuminated; on the following day he in his turn gave hospitality to the native authorities, the members of the Divan and the aga; and, in order not to be behind his Mussulman guests in courtesy, he had his table separated from theirs: they would have been shocked to see wine on their own table. At Rosetta the mufti refrained from making the usual preparations for the celebration of the festival, in order to lead the population to suppose that the French had forbidden the celebration. Menou ordered him to conform to the customary practice, and himself

contributed to the splendour of the rejoicings by offering a Turkish dinner to the local sheiks, and a serenade and dance to the people. He went with his officers and some savants and artists then at Rosetta to a nocturnal fête given by what Vivant-Denon calls 'the chief civil magistrate': it was an Arab festival, organized in the Egyptian fashion in the street, which had been transformed with the aid of tents, carpets and lamps into a reception hall; and in this unexpected environment the general and his French companions enjoyed until dawn the spectacle of dances to the strains of native music.

Thus were celebrated in Egypt, under a foreign rule still in the course of establishment, the usual festivals, the festivals of the country. They were not the only ones through which Bonaparte exerted himself to satisfy the innate Egyptian love of a spectacle and to associate French and natives in rejoicings. On 1 Vendémiaire of the year VII (September 22nd, 1798), the anniversary of the foundation of the Republic was commemorated by a grand festival, arranged by the general-in-chief in order to maintain the patriotism of his troops and at the same time to strike the imagination of the natives of the country.

He had decreed the celebration of this anniversary and approved the necessary arrangements in the principal garrison centres a month in advance. The most memorable witnesses to the ancient glory of Egypt were to pay their tribute on that day to the young glory of the French army: 'The Alexandria garrison will celebrate the festival in front of Pompey's column,' above which the tricolour was to wave; 'Cleopatra's needle will be illuminated.' At Cairo, after the parade on the Ezbekieh square, 'a deputation from each battalion will set out to plant the tricolour above the highest pyramid.' The 'troops in Upper Egypt' were to 'celebrate their festival among the ruins of Thebes.'

The military parade in Cairo, organized with meticulous care, took place in an environment which, in accordance with Bonaparte's favourite formula, associated West with East, the French Republic with its new Mussulman subjects. Access to the immense circus, the periphery of which con-

tained as many columns as there were departments in France, was given by two entrances. One was a triumphal arch on the front of which was painted a picture of the battle of the Pyramids; the other was a portico on which was inscribed, in Arabic, the verse: 'There is no other god but God, and Mahomet is His prophet.' On two faces of the obelisk in the middle of the circus were these inscriptions, in French: 'To the French Republic, Year VII,' and 'To the expulsion of the Mamelukes, Year VI'; these inscriptions were displayed in Arabic on the other two faces. In these incongruous surroundings Bonaparte had got together sheiks and members of the Cairo Divan, delegates from the provincial divans, the aga of the janissaries, and the Emir Hadji, to contemplate a parade so conceived as to impress both the French taking part in it and the natives witnessing it.

All the troops of the garrison, augmented by detachments from neighbouring commands, were formed in a square round the circus, facing the central obelisk. They were in parade uniform. After reviewing them, Bonaparte took his place on the raised platform at the foot of the obelisk, between seven altars of antique form surmounted by flags, while the massed bands played warlike marches and patriotic airs. Then, at the command of the general-in-chief, there were salvos. The troops then entered the circus, in close formation, battalion by battalion, as the charge was sounded, and fell in to listen to the reading of the proclamation the general-in-chief had addressed to them; it was saluted with shouts of '*Vive la République!*' All the flags and banners were then carried to the foot of the platform to receive from Bonaparte's hands insignia recalling the army's victories over the Mamelukes. This was followed by the playing of the '*Marche des Marseillais*,' the '*Chant du Départ*,' and a composition written for the occasion, after which an imposing march past brought the military ceremony to an end.

That day a grand banquet brought together at Headquarters the native notables and the French military and civil authorities. The decoration of the banqueting hall, like that of the scene of the parade, symbolized the alliance of the two associated elements. 'On all sides Turkish colours

were hung intermingled with Republican colours ; at the top of the piled arms the crescent and the revolutionary cap, the Koran and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, were assembled together.' In the afternoon, in the Ezbekieh, there were races between Arab and French horses. In the evening, after fireworks, brilliant illuminations transformed the square into an immense ballroom, in which the soldiers danced together to the sound of fanfares, dominated from time to time by that of cannon.

According to contemporary French accounts, the tenor of which is confirmed by the disdainful commentaries of Abderrahman el Gabarti, the native crowd, curious but impassive, looked on at this grandiose festival unimpressed. Almost the only things that struck it were the number of troops, the precision of their movements, and the evolutions of the artillery. This result, incomplete but not without significance, was of the sort at which modern colonization has often since aimed by similar demonstrations : ' Show force,' Lyautey used to say, ' to avoid using it.'

At every point occupied in Egypt, so far as local resources permitted, there was the same military display, involving no threat, in honour of the seventh anniversary of the French Republic. The same effort at Franco-Egyptian fraternity was put forth everywhere on this occasion.

Thanks to the unity of views Bonaparte was able to establish and maintain between his lieutenants and himself, their native and religious policy was generally identical with that which he himself followed at Cairo. Simultaneously with their belligerent or police operations against centres of insurrection, the commandants of provinces instituted the administrative organization decreed by Bonaparte, installed divans, appointed agas, and formed companies of janissaries. Bonaparte kept watch to ensure that they made no blunders in their relations with the natives, and when he noticed a mistake or tactical error on their part he called their attention to it. ' I do not approve,' he wrote to General Zayonchek, ' of your arresting the Divan without ascertaining whether it was to blame or not, and releasing it a few hours later. That is not the way to win

them over. Study the peoples among whom you are living ; note those who are best worth employing ; make examples at times, justly and with severity ; but never do anything suggestive of caprice or irresponsibility.'

When a local leader, influential with his compatriots, showed readiness to come to terms with the invader, nothing was left undone to make things easy for him, even if he had shown active opposition in the past. Native officials who had done well were rewarded for their fidelity, and their zeal was encouraged in all sorts of ways—by gratuities, small services, or presents. The return from the pilgrimage to Mecca was protected everywhere as at Cairo. Kléber at Alexandria and Menou at Rosetta competed in caring for a group of Barbary pilgrims who came to them for assistance in getting back to Barbary by sea.

Except in cases of reprisals, persons and property were protected against violence, plunder, and fraud. The generals of the army in Egypt were animated by close concern for humanity, honest dealing, and morality. Kléber had occasion to fine the Mussulmans by way of punishment ; when the behaviour of the public improved, he was the first to propose to Bonaparte that the fine should be refunded. On one occasion he considered a punishment ordered by Bonaparte too drastic ; he discussed it with him, even with some heat. 'We shall certainly succeed,' wrote Menou at the same moment, 'if we administer with justice and morality. . . . It is on the morality of the French leaders above all that the solidity of our establishments in Egypt will depend.'

Dissatisfied with the fiscal aspect of certain administrative measures, Menou wrote to Sucy, the *ordonnateur en chef*: 'We have to be firm, just, humane, and absolutely true to our word with the people of Egypt. If those in charge everywhere are upright and deal severely with peculators, we shall establish here the finest colony in the world. If the contrary happens, if those in charge, military or civil, and their subordinates regard this country as a territory to be preyed on, we have not six months longer to remain here, and we shall take back with us nothing but



*THÉOLOGIE à la TURQUE.*

*The Patri of the Church of Mohammed.*



*PRÆTOR URBANUS: ... facing against of the Capital Master of Venus, provided by the Procurator of his Court.*

THÉOLOGIE À LA TURQUE (above)

PRÆTOR URBANUS (below)

English caricatures by Gillray. Author's collection



the reproaches and execrations of the peoples of Egypt.' Reynier reported to Bonaparte from Belbeis : ' I am not in the least inclined to put up with any sort of knavery or dishonesty around me, particularly in the first stages of the organization of the country, in which we should try to win over the inhabitants by good administration.' General Dugua had complaints to make of General Vial's administration at Damietta, and wrote strongly about it to Bonaparte ; he concluded his report with these words : ' Anyone who left you in ignorance of the fact that the Turks detest us at Damietta would be blameworthy, and so would anyone who left you in ignorance of the reason.' In Upper Egypt Desaix, who was still in the throes of the conquest of the region, indignantly denounced some pillagers who had tried to seize some goods at the market of Minieh without paying for them ; he took the most rigorous measures against marauders. He wrote this admirable sentence to one of his divisional officers, Belliard : ' I know of no finer fame for a provincial governor than to hear praises of his scrupulous justice.' It rested entirely with Bonaparte to give, from the moment of the first contact between France and north African Islam, this complete model of a completely new native and religious policy, carried from the first to limits rarely attained since and certainly never exceeded.

The story, sometimes accurately told, of Bonaparte's religious policy re-echoed throughout Europe during the period of his command in Egypt. It was carried by copies of his manifestos to the Egyptians, of his letters to Mussulman princes, and of proclamations of the Divan, and also by descriptions of festivals celebrated in Cairo and by the letters of French officers or officials. Attention was thus drawn to it, although it was but an accessory of a drama which attracted attention mainly through its diplomatic and military aspects. Never before had European conqueror spoken and acted in this way toward the inhabitants of a foreign country, be they Mahometans, Buddhists, Brahmans, or pagans. It was but one step from this story to the allegation that Bonaparte had turned Mussulman ; and that



step was taken by people who had an interest in ridiculing the general or discrediting him in European eyes. The allegation is to be found in contemporary pamphlets published in the countries at war with France. Forty years after these events, the author of a history of the expedition which is not without value considered the subject to be worth a brief discussion, which he concluded as follows : ' All that Bonaparte did was to appear Mahometan. This was what profound wisdom and skilful policy prompted. It conciliated the imams, the muftis, and the ulema ; and the people through the example of these ministers of their religion.' This conclusion gives an exact definition of what Bonaparte aimed at, if he did not achieve it. As for the question ' Did he turn Mussulman ? ' it is one of those to which it was sufficient to reply, alike during his lifetime and after his death, ' it would have leaked out ! '

In the France of the Directory a certain philosophic daring, the fruit of the closing years of the eighteenth century, embracing all religions in a universal scepticism, rendered more intelligible to the minds of the directing class the subtle game Bonaparte, as proconsul of Egypt, was playing towards Egyptian Islam. The French newspapers published at the time of the expedition a ' conversation in one of the pyramids between Bonaparte and several imams and muftis,' dated 25 Thermidor, year VI (August 12th, 1798). In this the hero was heard giving some sort of definition of his Mussulman policy, and ending with an appeal to his interlocutors to make common cause with him and to assist the aims of his campaign ; he showed that this was their duty toward their co-religionists and their Prophet. Their replies showed them to be convinced of his divine mission and rallying to him. Unfortunately this interview was apocryphal ; Bonaparte was neither at Cairo nor at Gizeh at the date the little work ascribes to the interview ; moreover, he never penetrated into the chamber of any pyramid, because he was not prepared to crawl on his belly to get in. The pamphlet is no more than an improving story, an excellent specimen of dialogue of

the living, made up out of the ideas and assertions contained in authentic documents. At least it shows a French imagination at work in the direction which the religious policy of the French governor of Egypt had actually taken.

England was another story. Justice to an adversary is a rare thing while the fighting is in progress ; moreover, at no other time is his activity so little understood. The English were already well acquainted with the needs of native policy through the progress of their rule in India ; but they understood little at first of what Bonaparte was doing in Egypt. For a while they saw little but matter for ridicule. Sometimes their humourists represented him 'putting on the turban'—embracing Islam ; sometimes, on the contrary, they imagined him being taken to the stake by the Turks, as a French Jacobin, with a folio entitled 'Mahomet's Imposture' in one hand and a manuscript, 'The Prophet unmasked,' in the other ; sometimes they had him installed at Cairo by a Coptic mayor—a portly Copt in French coat and knee-breeches, with bare calves and feet, riding a donkey whose hindquarters an infantryman with Mephistophelean features is pricking with his bayonet, and preceded by a revolutionary prosecutor, stark naked save for the scarf over his shoulder. Facile humour, excusable amid the passions awakened by war. At a later date the English were to devote more serious and more fair-minded attention to Bonaparte's civil work in Egypt.

## VI

### *TRIUMPHS AND TROUBLES OF A COLONIAL CONQUEST*

THE FIRST phase and the first condition of success of the colonial enterprise represented by the Egyptian expedition consisted in taking possession of the country, effectively occupying it, and establishing the army on the conquered soil. When, after the occupation of Cairo, he assumed the task of governing and administering Egypt, Bonaparte had to take account in the first place of the needs of the army which was pursuing the task of conquest and was responsible for the occupation of the country. He had to watch over the health and safety and provide for the maintenance and provisioning of forty thousand men. His responsibilities as head of the army were the determining cause of administrative measures which were undertaken in the interest of the troops, but which could not fail to touch the interests of the inhabitants of the country in which the French army was operating and taking up its quarters.

The day after the battle of the Pyramids, Bonaparte ordered the organization within a week of four military hospitals, at Gizeh, Boulak, Old Cairo, and Cairo. Some of the finest dwellings of the fugitive Mamelukes, including Murad's country house at Gizeh and Ibrahim Bey's farm at Kasr el Aini, were allocated to the care of the sick and wounded of the expedition. In the train of Desgenettes, physician-in-chief, and Larrey, surgeon-in-chief of the army, and their medical staffs, medicine made its re-entry into the country which is said to have been its cradle. The natives were not, of course, admitted into the military hospitals, which were reserved to the French. 'Charity begins at

home.' But when it is remembered what the only native hospital then existing in Egypt was, a sink in which the unhappy patients died off amid rottenness and infection, it can be imagined how great was the interest, even among those who could not profit directly from them, in the installation of establishments in which the rules of hygiene were observed, the resources of medicine and surgery applied, and patients often sent out cured.

The same example was given to the natives in the provincial towns garrisoned by the French. At Alexandria, Kléber charged three of his subordinates with the progressive improvement of the installation and management of a temporary hospital, the insufficiency of which was quickly felt. At Rosetta, Menou occupied himself with the organization of two hospitals each of 200 beds, plainly intended to serve a whole section of Lower Egypt. Subsequently other garrison centres, notably Damietta, were provided with similar establishments.

As it was intended that the army should remain in Egypt, even the creation of permanent hospitals, of a better and more elaborate type than the simple army dressing stations, was not sufficient. It was also necessary to determine the nature and treatment of the maladies most frequently occurring in Egypt, and the influence of the climate on health in the various localities in which the troops were operating or being stationed. Desgenettes instructed all the military medical officers to study these questions, and issued a circular indicating to them the common plan they were to follow in studying the 'physical and medical topography of Egypt.' He recommended them also to observe the processes, however rudimentary, of the native empirical treatment, and, in the interest of their research, themselves to treat the Egyptians. 'In spite of their prejudices,' he wrote, 'the Orientals have always shown great confidence in European medical men. This has often led travellers who are strangers to our art, but whose minds have been cultivated through the sciences, to make use of this title among the natives as a recommendation. The services you will render the natives will be the more marked : they will surely procure for you

in exchange the information we are eager to collect ; for we have to believe, for the honour of the human heart, that benefits sometimes excite gratitude.' That which Desgenettes defined in these beautiful words, all imbued with philanthropy and scientific ardour, is a proceeding of which modern colonization has frequently made use, under the name of medical assistance. This time, the native was directly concerned in the work undertaken by the military medical body : the maladies that attacked him and the influences to which he was subjected were the same as those to which the French were liable ; it was for his good as well as theirs that the army physicians were to work ; their science was to be at the service of anyone who called upon it, Egyptian or French.

The reports received and published by Desgenettes show that his instructions were faithfully and promptly carried out. His collaborators went to work at once. Carrié studied the physical and medical topography of Menouf, Savaresi that of Damietta and Saleyeh, Renati that of Old Cairo ; Ceresole described the medical observations he made in a journey from Cairo to Siout ; Bruant formulated the results of his studies on ophthalmia and dysentery, which may be described as two plagues of Egypt ; Barbès wrote a memorandum on the diseases treated at the Old Cairo hospital.

Faithful to their chief's plan, they all extended their research simultaneously to French and natives, refusing the latter neither consultations nor medicines. 'The foreign medical men inspire a great deal of confidence in the inhabitants of Said<sup>1</sup> ; the natives readily reveal their trouble,' stated Ceresole, quoting several cases in which he had been consulted by natives, both men and women. Carrié denounced one of the scourges of Egypt, infantile mortality : 'Those,' he wrote, 'who spread in Egypt sound principles on the physical education of children and who succeed in getting these principles adopted and put into practice will render a great service to the human species.' The spirit animating these men was the same which had dictated Desgenettes' circular ; they did not confine them-

<sup>1</sup> A name often given to Upper Egypt.

selves to their bare duties as army medical officers, but carried out their scientific and philanthropic mission to the full, exerting themselves to enrich the patrimony of their science and to solace humanity.

To treat the prevalent maladies was not their whole task ; they had also to prevent epidemics, and, to that end, to begin by assuring the sanitary defence of Egypt. Bonaparte had concerned himself with this from the time of his arrival at Alexandria, and had ordered the setting up of a quarantine station. After the capture of Cairo he completed this first measure by the organization of a complete system of defence. A health committee was charged with the application to Egypt of the regulations in force in the Mediterranean ports. Blanc, a member of this committee and a former health officer at Marseilles, was placed in charge of quarantine stations ; later a former French merchant, Prix-Réal, was made his assistant. A little later a commission was set up, and then a 'bureau of health and sanitation,' for the three towns of Cairo, Old Cairo, and Boulak ; an army medical officer, Frank, was attached to the health bureau, and Desgenettes, the physician-in-chief, was himself called in for important deliberations. A quarantine station was established at Cairo ; two others were set up at Rosetta and Damietta. This brought the total number of establishments up to four ; they were staffed by ex-merchant captains, with sailors as warders.

As soon as it had been set up, the new health administration promulgated and put into operation the regulations needed for the prevention of the importation and propagation of contagious diseases, especially the most deadly of all, plague.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Desgenettes and his colleagues

<sup>1</sup> The further burial of the dead within the city of Cairo was prohibited ; burials were permitted only in cemeteries outside the city. At the approach of winter, the most favourable season for the development of plague, the inhabitants were ordered by proclamations and notices to air their things and expose them to the sun ; fumigations were carried out in the interior of houses ; every suspected case had to be notified, when it was visited by a French physician ; severe punishments were decreed if any person, whether an official or a private individual, failed to carry out the prescribed formalities, concealed a suspected case, failed to make a due report, or neglected any of the precautions laid down.

prepared distributing to combat the scourge, if it could not be entirely eliminated, by studying its treatment and notices indicating the means of tending it. This was the first time that a set of institutions and of rational measures had been brought to bear on a malady which through all time had ravaged Egypt, and which, for lack of counter-measures, had become endemic. The natives had as much as the French to gain from the efforts made to introduce into their country sanitation, prophylactic measures, and such methods of treatment as were then known to medical science.

One of the principal causes of insanitariness at Cairo consisted in the repulsive dirtiness of most of the houses and all the streets. The inhabitants were called upon to sweep and sprinkle their houses twice a day. The streets were cleared of garbage, which was thenceforth to be carried away from the town to a specified area.

With the exception of a small minority of educated and cultivated men, the native population did not at first understand the utility of these public health measures. The people were incapable of realizing the effect of these measures but were upset in their own habits, and they saw little in the new practices imposed on them but annoyances, administrative red tape, or mysterious rites, of which their ignorance, apathy, and fatalism prevented them from seeing the value.

There was all the more reason why they should object to the measures aimed at assuring the safety of the army. During the night the streets of Cairo were plunged into the completest darkness, the light of the moon being the only public illumination in use in the capital of Egypt. The inhabitants were ordered to light the streets at night by suspending lanterns outside their doors. Patrols went round the city, nailing up the doors whose lanterns had gone out and fining the owners or tenants. Subsequently big four-faced street lamps were put up in the public thoroughfares, thirty feet apart, at the expense of the rich. Like the obligation to sweep and sprinkle the houses, and the cleaning of the streets, the lighting of the town was in the interest of the natives as well as of the army ; but its general

utility did not reconcile the natives to the slight inconvenience of having to provide it themselves.

Like many oriental cities, Cairo was divided into a vast number of compartments by heavy wooden gates placed across the streets. In the event of insurrection, these gates could transform the various quarters of the town into so many entrenched forts. Even apart from this, it was essential that the police and military patrols should be able to go anywhere without being liable to find the gates closed wherever the inhabitants might take a fancy to shut them in their faces. On Bonaparte's orders working parties of sappers proceeded to the removal of these interior gates. The work was done in the interest of the army, and incidentally for the maintenance of order, to everybody's benefit ; it did no injury to the natives ; none the less, it irritated and alarmed them. It was no more than a precaution, inspired by legitimate distrust, but they saw in it an intention to do injury, to commit aggression. ' This operation,' wrote an Arab chronicler, ' disturbed the people and set them guessing at its purpose. They said : " The French mean to kill the Mussulmans during the Friday prayer." '

As in all primitive countries, in which, for lack of protection by the public forces, private individuals are obliged to look after their own protection, the majority of the Egyptians, peasants and townspeople alike, carried arms, generally firearms. The French had too much ground for thinking that these would be used against them to leave the natives in possession of their arms ; they confiscated them. It was an elementary precaution of which the necessity was amply shown at the time ; but the future was to show that it was incompletely carried out even in Cairo ; and it could not fail to arouse indignation among the inhabitants. It also filled them with mistaken apprehensions ; many believed that the French were compelling them to give up their arms in order to be able the better to attack their means of existence, their property, and their religion.

Finally, like all of north Africa and a large part of Turkey in Asia, Egypt was overrun in all directions by nomad Arabs—the Bedouins. Their raiding parties, well armed and



still better mounted, were the terror of the unfortunate fellaheen. Bonaparte painted an unflattering portrait of them in a letter to the Directory : ' The Arabs are to Egypt what the Barbets are to the county of Nice, with this great difference, that instead of living in the mountains they are all horsemen living in the midst of the deserts. They pillage Turks, Egyptians, and Europeans alike. Their ferocity is on a par with the miserable life they lead, exposed for days at a time in the burning sands to the heat of the sun, with no water to drink. They are merciless and without faith : the most hideous spectacle of savage man that it is possible to imagine.' Of all the elements of the Egyptian population, they were the most hostile and the most formidable to the French. The interest of the army coincided in this matter with that of the settled natives. In every province the nomad Arabs who showed hostility to the army were vigorously pursued ; cavalry raids made them feel for the first time that there was a force determined to leave no misdeed unpunished ; appropriate measures such as disarmament, fines in kind, and the taking of hostages assured as far as possible that those tribes who showed signs of a change of heart should keep the engagement they entered into. A sort of Levantine *condottiere*, Bartholomew the Greek, entered into the service of the French. He mercilessly tracked down the pillaging bands who infested the surroundings of Cairo ; but in the course of his services he acquired a reputation for savagery which did more harm than good to his employers. Little by little the Bedouins became less aggressive, their raids became rarer, and Bonaparte, having checkmated them, was able to think of methods of completing their submission and confining them to the two useful and even necessary functions they fulfilled—that of herdsmen and that of caravaneers, middlemen in the trade which Egypt carried on across the deserts with the Soudan and central and northern Africa.

The army needed not only medical, sanitary, and defence services, but money, foodstuffs and stores of all sorts, saddle-horses, and draught animals. It required money

for army pay, and also for lodging and food, remounts and transport. All of these were available; Egypt produced foodstuffs and forage, horses and camels in ample quantity for the needs of the expeditionary corps; the only difficulty lay in the payment to the individuals called upon to supply them. If Bonaparte had been indifferent to burdening the natives and, in consequence, alienating them, the question would have been relatively simple. It was complicated only by the interest Bonaparte had in dealing tactfully with the people under his administration. Egypt manifestly had sufficient resources to provide her new government with the financial means necessary for the support of an army of forty thousand men. But the Treasury could only be filled by the influx of taxes, and until this began there was an acute shortage of cash—and no means of discounting anticipated receipts. Everything thus turned on a question of money, and of liquid money.

Under a decree signed and published on board the *Orient*, the public funds were seized and placed under seal wherever French troops appeared. But in Egypt taxes were not due for payment until the floods of the Nile reached their maximum. In July, the waters of the Nile were low, and so also were the public funds. The cash in hand was insignificant compared with the money needed to meet military expenditure. Thus the seizure of the public funds still left an enormous margin between the assets and liabilities of the Treasury, and Bonaparte was hard put to it to cover the shortage.

He began by ordering the Administrative Commission to farm out the customs at Cairo, with various secondary sources of revenue indicated to him by Magallon. This operation, he calculated, ought to bring in 100,000 *talaris* before the end of the month. At the same time he tried to make as much profit as possible out of a Mint he found at Cairo. Regulations were drawn up for its functioning; 3,000 piastres were advanced to its director. Berthollet was instructed to ascertain whether it was true that the conversion of *talaris* into *medins* (a *medin* was one-fortieth of a piastre) would yield a profit of one-third, and, if this were so, to discover how many coins the Mint could transform daily.

Evidently Berthollet's inquiry confirmed the profitability of the conversion, for, according to an officer's statement, manufacture soon attained the figure of 200,000 *medins* a day. The army had brought from France gold and silver ingots of which a part had been exchanged for coin at Alexandria ; Kléber was ordered to recover the ingots from their holders, who were indemnified in kind, and to send the ingots urgently to Cairo, where the Mint would transform them into coin. A month later Monge, Berthollet, and Costaz were appointed inspectors of the Mint, and instructed to report on its working, to draw up an inventory of the material it had in stock, and to suggest means of accelerating its work.

But the needs of the army greatly exceeded the amount of the cash yielded by the farming of the Customs, the conversion of *talaris* into *medins*, and the melting down of ingots. It was thus necessary, pending the receipt of taxes, to discover supplementary resources. The first on which Bonaparte counted was the properties of the Mamelukes. The confiscation of these properties did no injury to the native population, which was no more impoverished by the spoliation of the Mamelukes than it had been enriched by their wealth. One of Bonaparte's first actions had been to decree the confiscation of all the properties of the Mameluke militia and their transfer to the French Republic. He had entrusted the Administrative Commission with the execution of this seizure and with the setting up in each occupied province of a commission with the same mandate. These operations of inventory and sequestration were the more urgent since the population had begun to pillage the premises abandoned by the Mamelukes in their flight. They were thus the subject of a series of orders issued by Bonaparte immediately after his entry into Cairo.<sup>1</sup>

Although these measures injured no legitimate interests of

<sup>1</sup> Any person holding effects belonging to the Mamelukes was to remit them within five days to the general storehouse, on pain of punishment and fine ; a bonus proportional to the value of the objects concealed was to be paid to any who exposed the receivers ; the wives of the Mamelukes were not authorized to retain their husbands' effects, but might become owners of them on payment of a sum to be fixed by a commission of three members.

the inhabitants other than the Mamelukes, they could not be carried out without a certain disturbance of local life. No seizure could be made without domiciliary visits and a whole apparatus of procurators and law officers, to which Orientals were not accustomed. The pillagers had to disgorge ; but, since the idea of legality was then unknown in the East, they were transformed into victims in their own eyes and in those of their compatriots. The promise of a reward to those who divulged the names of receivers was a premium on denunciation ; it was all the more generally disturbing since there were few whose conscience was clear. If the major part of the confiscated properties was not to be allowed to escape from sequestration, it was necessary to extend investigations to the harems ; and the domiciliary visits to these inviolable quarters ran counter to Mussulman custom. Many of the Mamelukes' wives were deservedly respected by the people : the French had themselves had experience of the devotion and generosity of such women as Setti Zuleyka, wife of Ibrahim Bey, and Setti Neffseh, wife of Murad Bey, before the conquest of Cairo. The population was shocked at the spectacle of their compulsory repurchase of their properties by the payment of large sums. Finally, the Mamelukes themselves, although they had never been popular, became so in their defeat, which was that of Islam, and in the collapse of their fortunes. Those of them who had been captured, and the wives and servants of those who had fled, now inspired nothing but compassion among their former subjects. This feeling of pity is revealed here and there between the lines of Abderrahman el Gabarti's chronicle : ' On the petition of the members of the Divan,' he writes, ' the imprisoned Mamelukes were set free ; they went to the mosque of Azhary in a deplorable state.'

Thus a general sense of vexations, chicanery, and persecution obscured from view such order and equity and even moderation as Bonaparte had been able to bring into an operation which was in itself legitimate. The natives saw nothing but the methodical spoliation of a race for whom they felt the respect habitually shown by Orientals toward their masters when these are of their own religion.

The seizure of the Mamelukes' estates made the state owner of landed property and brought to its storehouses articles of every sort ; but it was liquid resources that it needed. The gold and silver objects were taken to the Mint and melted down. The only use that could be made of the rest—securities, silks, velvets, muslins, precious stones, ivories—was to sell them. In order to find a buyer, Bonaparte created one, a '*Compagnie de Commerce*' which was to purchase these objects and then sell them on its own account, either on the Egyptian market or in Europe. Thus an army need gave birth to an organism which was the first of its sort to see the light in Egypt. The naval blockade and the stagnancy of internal trade doomed it to an early end.

Even the *Compagnie de Commerce* took time to organize. Meanwhile Bonaparte had recourse to other expedients—auction sales of jewels, costly fabrics, elephants' teeth, and so on ; lotteries,<sup>1</sup> the prizes in which were diamonds, clocks, watches, and houses in Cairo, Boulak, and Old Cairo ; and an issue of bonds on the Mint, delivered in exchange for precious metals which the owners gave in for melting, and repayable in three months. These expedients were episodes in the hunt for cash which was the whole financial history of the early stages of the expedition.

It was some weeks before circumstances enabled Bonaparte to have recourse to these expedients. Meanwhile, under the pressure of necessity, he had to resort to a more direct and certain procedure, and simply to put his hand into private purses. A number of extraordinary contributions were levied by his orders on trading bodies—300,000 francs, payable in twenty-four hours, on the merchants of Alexandria ; 100,000 francs, payable in forty-eight hours, on those of Rosetta ; 150,000 francs, payable in five days, on those of Damietta ; 10,000 *talari*s, payable in ten days, on the traders of khan Khalil, the celebrated bazaar of Cairo ; 10,000

<sup>1</sup> The administration included, for instance, in a lottery 'a superb gold repeater, enamelled blue, enriched with brilliants of great beauty, with its chain similarly enriched with brilliants in open settings, and key and two charms similarly set. This watch is by L'Epine and cost 26,000 francs in Paris.'

*talaris* on those of the soap *okel*<sup>1</sup>; 6,000 on those of the apple *okel*; 15,000 on the corporation of *sâqa* (water carriers); 10,000 on the sugar sellers; 15,000 on the sheiks El Goury, dealers in Indian fabrics; 60,000 in cash on the Damascene merchants, together with 40,000 in clothing material for the troops; 200,000 on the coffee sellers; 100,000 on the Copts responsible for the collection of taxes in the smaller towns.

This time the natives themselves were directly hit. The contributions were, it is true, of the nature of loans or advances either on taxation or in other ways. They were none the less forced loans, and such measures have never been popular with taxpayers, a rule to which the Egyptian was no exception. Bonaparte had been careful not to kill the golden goose, not to tax the various trades more than each could stand. The agricultural population had been spared as much as possible. The intendant general, a Copt, praised Bonaparte's moderation. 'I wish,' he said, 'I had two million sequins—I should say to Bonaparte: "Look, see these! Pay your soldiers well and win victories all over the world; you are made to command hearts and minds."' But there is every reason to suppose that the taxpayers concerned did not share the enthusiasm of this intendant general, and were less sensible of Bonaparte's moderation than of the necessity of dipping into their pockets.

The contributions from Cairo were amplified by those from the provinces; and there again the gold had a very different sound in the ears of those who paid it out and of those who encashed it. Before long Kléber at Alexandria and Menou at Rosetta were feeling one and the same difficulty—the lack of money. The two generals confessed their penury to one another, and reported it to Bonaparte. 'In the midst of abundance,' wrote Menou, 'I am powerless, for I have not a *sou*.' 'I am spending a great deal of money,' reported Kléber sadly; '. . . the paymaster is desperate.' Soon the most stringent economy failed to make good the insufficiency of their resources, and each of them had to

<sup>1</sup> An *okel* is a group of stores or shops belonging to the same branch of trade.

resort to forced loans. Menou seems to have resigned himself to them only in the last extremity, after trying everything else, 'even bonds issued privately in my own name,' he writes. Kléber had to impose a loan of 30,000 francs on the trading community, repayable out of the customs revenue ; at first he imposed only half of this on the Mussulman merchants. But the treachery of the sherif Koraim, in which they were accessories, led him to punish them by exacting ■ military contribution of 100,000 francs. This was a penal measure, a fine ; the case was different when the only reason for exacting contributions was the emptiness of the Treasury and the storehouses ; and this was the most frequent case. Contributions in cash and requisitions in kind were felt by the natives to be vexatious when there was no other reason for them than to procure funds for the Treasury, cloth and leather for the army, or rice and meat for the fleet. The French occupation was thus compelled, from lack of funds, to busy itself with the raising of revenue at the very outset, when it was still viewed with the utmost disfavour. The need of money continued to be one of the worst troubles of the expedition, one of the obstacles in the way of the moral conquest of Egypt ; and it made its appearance from the first.

The pursuit of the nomad Arabs and the Mameluke groups necessitated the provision of remounts for the French cavalry. To this end, saddle-horses were requisitioned throughout Egypt.<sup>1</sup> In order to organize transport, the army needed pack animals ; it procured them by requisitioning the needed number of camels. A receipt was, of course, given for every animal requisitioned, and handed to the owner, who was thus provided with a title to reimbursement. None the less, the Egyptians found themselves made to give up horses or camels for a piece of paper, and that at an arbitrary price in which they had no say ; it was impossible that they should be satisfied with the exchange, and they were not. Nor could they be with having to supply the produce of their harvests, forage and grain, and supplies

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of those belonging to certain native officials and those used for turning mills.

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of every sort needed for the provisioning of the army, which, through lack of ready money, had too often to procure its supplies by way of requisition.

It did not make much difference to the native that the occupying force acted thus with no light heart, and only because it had no choice. Whether landowner, merchant, or farmer, the native saw only one thing, his own material loss. And the gallery of spectators, far more numerous than the persons actually hit, took alarm and bewailed their lot.

Bonaparte soon realized the damage these emergency measures were doing him, and feared also that his lieutenants might carry them to excess ; less than a month later, he issued ■ formal order categorically prohibiting the exaction of contributions in cash. At the same time he set up a special commission, to which natives could appeal against abuses of which they had been or might be victims at the hands of his subordinates, including injury to their fortune, their land, or their person. The commission was composed of the sheik Sadat, the Venetian Rosetti, and Brigadier-General Junot. But these prudent and humane arrangements could not at once wipe out the effect produced, above all, on the influential propertied class by the past calls on their purses, their stores, their granaries, their stables, and their mews ; and the animosity aroused against Bonaparte's rule during the weeks of these exactions continued to exist after he had put ■ stop to them.

This was still more so since the ending of contributions in cash did not mean the end of supplies in kind. Late in August an order issued by the general-in-chief fixed the number of horses to be supplied by each province of Egypt, as a 'customary gift,' to complete the remounting of the cavalry. Customary or not, a present not voluntarily offered is called in plain English a levy, and no population ever liked levies, even if it was accustomed to still worse ones.

Those of Bonaparte's lieutenants who, like Kléber and Menou, had had sufficient experience of territorial command to gain an idea of political necessities, had no need of his instructions to resort as little as possible either to levies or



to requisitions. At the time when the order prohibiting the former left Cairo, they spontaneously denounced both the one and the other as objectionable. Kléber, by way of excuse for having met administrative expenses with a sum of 100,000 francs intended by Bonaparte for the navy, pointed out that he had done so 'at the moment when the new Divan reported to me the arrival of several deputations from Arab tribes to negotiate a general pacification in the province of Bahireh, so that it would have been very impolitic to speak of any loan or requisition.' In the same letter he showed that such proceedings, by annoying and alarming the population of the city and its environs, would make an end of the provisioning of Alexandria : 'As I have said to you, Citizen General, everything has to come to us from without, through confidence and the hope of gain ; the system of requisitions would thus be disastrous for Alexandria, since it would bring us to famine.' Thus the best and most circumspect of his own lieutenants brought to Bonaparte's notice the political inopportuneness of levies and requisitions.

Bonaparte had begun by leaving intact the system of private property, apart from the properties of the Mamelukes, which were confiscated for the benefit of public funds. But it was inevitable that the actual native population should have sooner or later to justify their own property to the new power. Landed property in Egypt served as the basis of taxation ; but it was itself without a stable and regularly established basis. Disputes between owners were of frequent occurrence, titles of a validity difficult to appreciate being produced in opposition to one another. The taxpayers found these conditions helpful in what in our day would be called 'fiscal evasion' : many properties escaped from payment of the *miry* or land tax. The Mamelukes had regularly proceeded by way of '*avania*,' that is to say, the confiscation of money or crops, when the tax was left unpaid or was insufficient for their needs ; they had thus been able to put up with these disordered conditions, which, indeed, they would have been quite unable to remedy. Bonaparte, however, was out to instal a regular administration. A revision of titles was thus needed, if only in the interest of

the finances of the expedition. But the need of money also suggested profiting by the opportunity to introduce into Egypt the taxes levied in Europe on the various dealings in landed property, its transfer and the transactions carried out by means of contracts or deeds. Bonaparte was thus led to deal simultaneously with the property system and with taxation, which until then had been untouched.

A decree of September 16th, 1798, prepared by Poussielgue, administrator general of finances, prescribed the establishment of a Registration Office, in which all owners must have their existing deeds registered, together with all future changes of ownership, of whatever nature. Titles to property would only remain valid if registered within a certain period, after which any properties not registered would be escheated. This obligatory formality was further subjected to a duty payment, due not only on the registration of titles on presentation for verification, but on changes of ownership subsequently declared and on all conceivable dealings in property. The majority of notarial and judicial acts and official certificates, together with a number of administrative documents, were made subject to similar duty payments. Finally, 'every person carrying on a profession or trade of any sort' was required to account for it by a commission or patent, to be supplied by the administration and subjected to the payment of a yearly duty. A special department, that of Registration and Domain Administration, was created to assure the carrying out of these formalities and the receipt of the taxation involved. To it were appointed Tallien, former member of the Convention, Magallon, two Copts, and a Mussulman native. The French staff of the registration offices was mainly recruited from among the civilians who had accompanied the army and from former Knights of Malta who had joined the army after the conquest of their island.

Thus there was superposed on a formality of registration a vast network of dues until then unknown to the natives. 'The fiscal spirit dominated this decree,' said the authors of a history of the expedition. It is a sort of spirit little to the taxpayer's taste, and the Egyptian taxpayer was no exception.

His impressions may be gauged from those of the chronicler Abderrahman el Gabarti. 'Ordinances were issued,' he writes, 'introducing pernicious usages. . . . Disordered accumulations of paragraphs and phrases set out to legitimize theft.' Then, after the crying injustice of this summary judgment: 'Payment was made for the inventory, and payment for partition. . . . Travellers were required to provide themselves with a certificate, for which they paid. . . . To notify births, payment had to be made. Payment was exacted for every transaction between private individuals.' The repetition of the word 'payment' indicates the element in Bonaparte's fiscal innovations that aroused the indignation of this intelligent but miserly Arab.<sup>1</sup>

In general, these applications of Western fiscal practice baffled the natives, who were unused to them and incapable of understanding the reason for them. From time immemorial they had had no experience of an administration in the least interested in the public welfare; how should they realize the duty of contributing to the cost of administration? For them, taxation was tribute paid to masters. Thus the new taxes with which they were to be burdened appeared to them as simply the outcome of the cupidity of their new masters.

The actual registration of properties did not proceed without difficulty. Many titles were informal, incomplete, or irregular; they had to be completed by witnesses or out of public knowledge; and to complicate the task of administration there was the suspicion in certain cases that the Mamelukes were putting up men of straw as pretended owners of their properties; hence inquiries, investigations, and searches. Thus the landowning class was harassed, annoyed, and thrown into opposition to the foreign power which was installing itself. When the damage these measures were doing him came to his knowledge, Bonaparte restrained the excessive zeal of the taxation officers, set up a commission

<sup>1</sup> His indignation was disproportionate to its occasion. The registration of titles to property has since been introduced into every foreign country; and the registration dues merely reproduced the usual forms of Western fiscal practice.

to receive claims from the natives, and permitted payment in kind where money was lacking. But it was long before he succeeded in effacing the impression created by these reforms, which would have gained by being made more slowly and in several stages. This is one of the points at which the interests of his army and the absolute need of money led Bonaparte to incur the hostility of part of the people under his administration.

The natives' primitive mills, driven by animal traction or by their own arms, were unequal to the supply of flour for the military bakeries. Windmills were built under the direction of Conté, the engineer, the first one at the northern end of the island of Rodah, and others subsequently on the heights surrounding Cairo, where recently they were still to be seen : tradition had preserved their name of ' Bonaparte's mills.' Others were set up at Rosetta, Damietta, Belbeis, and Saleyeh. ' Of what utility will this mechanism be,' notes an officer, ' in a country in which so many arms are employed raising the water of the river to the fields, and slowly and badly milling a little corn ! ' The natives had, indeed, no idea of the mechanical application of natural forces, particularly of the wind, though it blows so steadily and strongly in Egypt ; their water wheels and their mills were driven by animals or by hand. This was one of the first lacunæ that the French observed and set out to make good. Even before Bonaparte's initiative, Menou had had the building of windmills considered at Rosetta ; in the course of correspondence with him the mathematician Fourier wrote : ' I am also busy with the plan of a very simple machine for making use of the wind for watering the soil.' The great sails set up by the French in the blue sky of Egypt thus taught the Egyptians a new means of milling corn and raising water.

The army lacked a certain number of articles not produced in Egypt, particularly wine, brandy, raisins, and timber. To procure these, Bonaparte relied on oversea trade, which he set out at once to develop. He wrote to Corfu, then ■ French possession, in order to establish trading relations with that island. A new market would thus be opened up

for Egyptian exports. But the naval disaster of Aboukir and the blockade of the Egyptian coasts made short work of this project. Egyptian trade across the Mediterranean with Europe and Asia Minor was at first completely stopped, and subsequently confined to the few activities permitted by gaps in the blockade. Even the coasting trade between Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta had to be prohibited, for fear of the English ships, and when its resumption became possible it was at the risk of the captains and shippers. The traffic of the port of Alexandria fell almost to nothing. The principal sufferers were the European residents, who almost monopolized Egypt's import and export trade ; but the native merchants and cultivators suffered also.

The presence of the large body of European consumers represented by the army of occupation was a novelty for Egypt, and multiplied the cases of commercial litigation for which a prompt and reliable judiciary was necessary. Bonaparte created this judiciary. Commercial tribunals were set up at Cairo, Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta, to deal with all the disputes and disagreements arising out of trade between merchants, shopkeepers, and brokers. The judges were appointed for three years—twelve for Cairo and six in the other towns, selected from among the merchants of the whole country ; they were presided over by a French commissioner. This was the first application, confined to commercial jurisdiction, of the principle which has since governed the mixed tribunals of Egypt. Seventy years were to pass before Bonaparte's idea was revived and carried to completion by reformers<sup>1</sup> who probably had no suspicion of the precedent they were following.

The provisioning of Cairo and the need for keeping the provinces in touch with the capital required the utilization to the utmost of the great thoroughfare represented by the Nile. Nile navigation was accordingly favoured, protected, and regularized. It was exempted from taxation, except for Customs dues already in force ; and orders were given to generals and civil and military administrative officers ' to ensure that it shall be neither disturbed nor retarded.' A

<sup>1</sup> The Khedive Ismail and Nubar Pasha.

special administration, with headquarters at Boulak, was set up for 'everything concerning Nile navigation,' and placed under Rear Admiral Perrée; an aga was appointed in charge of the policing of the river. A service of river transports was established; regular sailings took place at fixed dates from Boulak, Rosetta, and Damietta. A postal service was created, and rates fixed for the carrying of letters; post offices were opened in Cairo and seven towns of Lower Egypt. Natives were permitted to make use of the postal facilities. Sucy, the *ordonnateur en chef*, was made organizer and director of the new postal administration. This was the first time that the government in Egypt, the state, had intervened in Nile navigation for any other purpose than to hold it to ransom; the first time that it had provided for the transmission of private correspondence; the first time that official communications and transport had been given a permanent and regular character. The navigation office, the Nile police, the river transport and postal organizations were in every respect entirely new public services.

But the Nile is not only a natural thoroughfare; it is the foster-father of Egypt, the great dispenser of fertility, the source of all wealth. The abundance of the harvests, and, consequently, the yield of taxation, depend on the manner in which the soil has been inundated; but the inundation depends in its turn on the government. No one appreciated more fully than Bonaparte, or defined better than Napoleon, the part played by the Nile in Egyptian agriculture, or the part played by the government in the distribution of the waters of the river. After showing that in Egypt the maintenance of the canals, the functioning of the irrigation works, and the distribution of the flood waters are elements of good administration, Napoleon continued: 'In no country has the government so much influence over the public prosperity. The government has no influence over the rain or snow that falls in Beauce or Brie. But in Egypt the government has direct influence on the extent of the inundation it directs. That is what made the difference between the Egypt administered by the Ptolemies and the Egypt already decaying

under the Romans and finally ruined under the Turks.'

In order that the Egypt ruined under the Turks might recover from its ruin under the French, Bonaparte concerned himself with assuring as complete utilization as possible of the flood waters through better maintenance and exact supervision of the canals. When the inundation began, he pointed out its importance to his subordinates and defined their duties : ' The success of the Nile inundation,' he told them, ' depends on the maintenance of the canals, or at least on their conservation, and the finances of the army are as closely interested as are the Egyptians in the ordered, intelligent, economical, and equal distribution of the waters.' The commandants of provinces accordingly supported their intendants in preventing cultivators from tapping the canals, especially those which fertilized big stretches of territory. To watch in this way over the finances of the army was to watch at the same time and even more directly over the well-being of the natives, whose one source of profit, big or little, was agriculture.

There was one canal which, for special reasons, was the object of more concern than any other—the canal that leaves the Nile at Ramanieh and ends at Alexandria. At flood, this canal filled the 310 wells that provided the fresh water consumed by the inhabitants of Alexandria, and for the watering of ships, until the next flood. It was navigable during the period of spate, and gave access to Rosetta without going out to sea ; thus during the English blockade it enabled Alexandria to be supplied with food, which was not obtainable from the arid or marshy environs of the city. It was thus essential to prevent the population, fellaheen or Bedouins, from drawing from the canal for watering their land, at the risk of nearly draining it dry. Hence one of the questions of most concern to Kléber was that of the passing of the flood waters into the Alexandria canal. On July 9th he instructed two civil engineers, Girard and Le Père, to inspect the city wells ; at the end of the same month he reported to the general-in-chief that the canal was in bad condition, and recommended its repair ; later, he formed

mobile columns for the prevention or punishment of damage, and had urgent repairs carried out ; on giving up the command of Alexandria to General Manscourt, he advised him to give special attention to this duty. Bonaparte seconded Kléber's action by detaching Marmont for duty in the province of Behera, with a mission 'to maintain the canal communication between El Ramanieh and Alexandria.' He opened a credit for the civil engineer attached to the commandant at Ramanieh, for the carrying out of necessary repairs. Thanks to the combined efforts of Bonaparte and Kléber, the canal, cleared, deepened, repaired, and protected, was soon able not only to fill the wells at Alexandria but to permit navigation for six weeks, a thing that had never been known under the Mamelukes, and a result no less serviceable to the Alexandrians than to the French, since they were just as much threatened as the French with death from thirst or starvation.

Never in the time of the Mamelukes had the government watched so attentively over the distribution of the waters of the Nile, the maintenance of the canals, and the irrigation systems. Elementary though it may seem, the principle that the interests of a government are bound up with the public prosperity, with the development of individual wealth, was one that had not before been applied to Egypt. The Mamelukes had had no conception of it, whereas to the French it was a stimulus. They had come to Egypt not as temporary visitors but with the intention of founding a colony there ; and they saw in the economic development of their possession, in the creation of new agricultural resources, the interest both of the government they had established and of the mother country they were serving from afar. 'I think,' wrote Menou to Bonaparte, 'Egypt should make good the Antilles for us.' And, prophesying the future in store for Egypt as a cotton and sugar cane country, with cochineal and indigo as subsidiary cultures, he declared : 'It is for you, General, to establish these industries.' Alongside this plan of agricultural development, Menou traced also that of the commercial development of the new colony : he saw French Egypt trading by sea with the Red Sea ports,



the Indies, Aden, Abyssinia, and the eastern coast of Africa, and communication established by caravans between the Nile and 'the Niger in Senegal.' 'I know,' he concluded, 'that all this is still a distant prospect; but in administration one must look far ahead.' These plans of economic development had often been sketched long before this by European travellers who had visited Egypt, but none of the governments that had succeeded one another in the country had ever entertained the idea of carrying them into execution. However little they may have been given effect in the time the French administration had at its disposal, it was a capital fact that a government had made its appearance with ideas of this sort, and had made them part of its programme.

The occupation and administration of the big cities, the building of defence works, and the carrying out of the improvements needed in the interest of the garrison or the inhabitants, called for the provision of maps. In order to determine the movements of troops and to occupy and govern provinces, it was necessary to have a general map of Egypt. No map existed either of Alexandria or of Cairo. The best map of Egypt the army had at its disposal was that of d'Anville, accurate enough but with few geographical names, and on too small a scale for the guidance of a marching column, or for the needs of the general staff and the government. Bonaparte arranged at once for the mapping of Alexandria and Cairo and the production of a general map of Egypt. Thus, well before the occupation was complete, Egypt found herself delivered over to the technical studies and scientific activities of ordnance survey officers, civil engineers, astronomers, and officers of the Engineers, collaborating in work of inestimable value both for science and for the country concerned. Together with medicine, surgery, and engineering, geometry and astronomy made their re-entry into Egypt in the wake of technicians stimulated by the noble idea of bringing the benefits of the progress in these sciences to one of the countries in which they had first flourished.

Science and scholarship were first applied to the mapping

of Alexandria, where, after the landing of the army, the various technical bodies needed for the execution of this great work were assembled. Officers of the military engineers and the ordnance survey, under the direction of Testevuide and Jacotin, civil engineers under Le Père and Girard, and astronomers, divided the task between them: the officers of the Engineers took charge of the Arab quarter, the ordnance survey officers of the interior of the old city and the whole of the modern city; the civil engineers took charge of the coast and the whole sea front, with the two ports, the island of Pharos, and its castle, and of the co-ordination and editing of all the partial surveys; and the astronomers Nouet and Méchain determined by a series of triangulations the position of the principal points of the city, the coast, and the island of Pharos, and the longitude and latitude of Alexandria. Thus the elements of a rigorously exact chart comprising the city, its environs, its two ports, and the channels, carefully sounded and buoyed, which gave access to the ports, were compiled with scientific precision. Foreseeing the practical utilization of this map, the civil engineers took account in advance of projects which they might be required to elaborate for the improvement and enlargement of the port, which had none of the usual installations, workshops, docks, or quays. How many data necessary for the preparation of such works must have been compiled by them!—exact soundings in the two ports, in the channels, and on the shoals covering the roadstead; information as to winds, currents, the progress of silting, deeps and shallows, tides; constant and variable effects of the sea on works and on navigation. After three months' hard work, rendered harder by the heat, the map of Alexandria was finished. In order to round off a task considerably added to by the zeal of those to whom Bonaparte had confided it, there remained only one thing more to be done by the civil engineers—the underground map of the city, with the outlets of the fresh water canal, the cesspools, and the wells.

Work was still in progress on the map of Alexandria when that of Cairo and the general map of Egypt were started.

The ordnance survey officers arrived in the capital at the end of September, 1798, while the work in which they had been taking part in Alexandria was nearing completion ; and they set to work at once on partial surveys in Cairo. One of them, Jacotin, compiled the map of the environs of the city. Their head, Testevuide, set to work on the preparations for the map of Egypt, of which he determined the scale. At the same time advantage was taken of the operations of the army for the carrying out of topographical surveys in various regions. During the marching of troops between Alexandria and Cairo, officers had already compiled a map of the route, which could be utilized for mapmaking. In September and October, General Andréossy, with the assistance of Fèvre, civil engineer, Potier and Bouchard, pupils of the Ecole Polytechnique, Tirlet, artillery officer, and Sabattier, officer of Engineers, mapped Lake Menzaleh, traced and measured the tongue of land which separates that lake from the sea, and sounded the channels. Major Souhait traced the course of the Nile from Cairo to Atfieh ; another officer, Marc-Antoine Geoffroy Château, brother of the naturalist, Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, reconnoitred the route from Cairo to Saleyeh and from that post to the point known as '*du trésor*,' on the route to Syria ; Captain Crépin traced the course of the canals of Filfel and Abu-Meneggeh and part of the Moueys canal. Toward the middle of October the map of Cairo was well on the way to completion, and everywhere civilians and military were competing in the drawing up of the partial maps which would enable a general map of Egypt to be constructed.

Thus some of the technical bodies that made up the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* were now at work preparing maps and surveying. Such professional activities were not confined to the groups just mentioned. Savants and artists had begun, before being gathered together in Cairo, to render in each of their special branches the services of which they were capable. Every sort of work had been begun almost on the day after landing, in preparation for an activity which was soon to become more intense and more methodical, in the inauguration of the land registration and

scientific exploration of Egypt and the development of the new colony. They were in themselves a lesson of inestimable value for the backward population that witnessed their work.

But this lesson was above the heads of the Egyptians of that time. The great majority of the natives were unconscious of it or indifferent to it, or prejudiced against the practice of what appeared to them to be mysterious rites, incomprehensible and even impious. The greatnesses of this colonial enterprise, so broadly planned and so loftily conceived, were at first without useful effect on the natives, even their élite. The hardships it brought, on the contrary, were felt and felt at once. A levy, a requisition, the institution of a new tax, a measure of public order or of policing, a punishment for the breach of some new regulation—all these produced their effect immediately, almost in advance, on the individuals suffering from them.

## VII

### FRENCH SAVANTS' ENTRY ON EGYPTIAN SOIL

ON 15 MESSIDOR (July 3rd), the second day after the landing of the French troops at the Marabout tower, the savants and artists forming the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* were transferred from the ships of war on which they had been embarked at Toulon to a frigate, the *Montenotte*, whose light tonnage permitted her to enter the port of Alexandria. The whole day was taken up in getting under way and navigating the channel, which was as yet uncharted and in which the *Patriote*, with the balloon park and the whole arsenal of scientific instruments for the use of the Commission, had grounded the day before. On the morning of July 4th, after a trying night passed on deck, the civil passengers of the *Montenotte* embarked in the frigate's long-boat, which took them across the Old Port and deposited them, with their baggage, on shore outside the gates of the city.

Bent under the load of their impedimenta, hot and panting, they set out towards Alexandria, which had shrunk greatly since ancient times and no longer extended to this spot. 'We arrived riotously,' one of them relates, 'after traversing the frightful ruins of the Arab quarter, a vast field of tombs, and some stretches of arid sand, with here and there a few palm-trees, fig-trees and saltwort plants.' In the city they were at a loss at first, not knowing where to go; in the end they discovered their whereabouts and made for the house of General Caffarelli du Falga, their superior officer.

Caffarelli was unable to take them in. Nothing had been provided for their lodging or subsistence. Their chief had had more pressing tasks in the command of the military

engineers ; moreover, until then he had had command only of soldiers, and had been accustomed to relying on the ingenuity of the troops in shifting for themselves in the field. The savants and artists had to follow suit. They did their best, at first with varying success, and the discomforts of this struggle for life produced a certain amount of ill-humour, which was soon dissipated by the sense of the comic. 'What a fine subject for a caricaturist,' wrote the young engineer Jollois, 'for Frenchmen, who laugh at everything, would have been this spectacle of savants at Pompey's column, painfully ascertaining its dimensions, and, on their return, eagerly hunting for wells where they might quench their thirst, pending the search for something to satisfy their hunger !'

Villiers du Terrage, of the Polytechnique, passed his first night at Alexandria sleeping on the ground, beside his trunk. He and his comrade Ripault, librarian and antiquary, gathered a few purslane leaves in a garden, which they seasoned with 'radical vinegar diluted with water' ; a ship's biscuit, owed to the charity of a soldier, completed this frugal meal. Not until July 6th did Villiers find a roof, in General Damas's residence ; he was still without 'any means of subsistence.' Most of his companions had no better success in solving the urgent problems of lodging and subsistence. 'We went in search,' reports the architect Norry, 'of rooms in the houses of the Europeans for our night's rest ; as the Turks had no obligations whatever towards us, the small number of rooms available for so many men compelled us to sleep ten to a dozen in a room. The excessive heat, our bad food (during the first days the markets did not supply foodstuffs enough, and rations were issued to us from the various ships ; the biscuit was very mouldy, and the salt meat almost putrid) ; the water from the wells, repulsively dirty and bitter, the mosquitos devouring us day and night, everything made our first month horribly uncomfortable.'

The general staff was busy with the starting of the troops for Rosetta and Ramanieh, and continued for two or three days to neglect the members of the Commission entirely. When they complained, the Chief of Staff, General Mercier,

referred them to General Kléber, who had been appointed to the command of Alexandria. Then one of the most illustrious of them, the mineralogist Dolomieu, made himself their mouthpiece in protesting against their abandonment without a roof or a meal. The civil engineers, for their part, went to Caffarelli, before he left for Cairo, to state their grievances. The general was full of promises—everything would go swimmingly at Cairo ; and having thus gilded the pill, he gave them for comfort the programme of their labours ! Only after five days of absolute destitution and great privations did the savants and artists ultimately receive from the military administration the ration for plain soldiers, of the miserable quality which Norry described, and rough quarters in attics.

They had met together for the first time at Alexandria, during those days of discomfort ; and they soon dispersed. Two of them, ranking above all the rest, the mathematician Monge and the chemist Berthollet, were particularly sought out by Bonaparte for their society, and even their advice ; they were to accompany him to Cairo, and left with him. They went with the general staff on horseback across the desert from Alexandria to Ramanieh, sharing the fatigues and sufferings of the soldiers, and themselves starting their campaign, attentively observing vestiges of antiquity found by the way, and noting the physical phenomena of desert regions. During their march across the sands Monge discovered the explanation of a phenomenon which was bringing the troops continual disappointments—the mirage. Sometimes they seemed to see water on the horizon, sometimes trees, and they suffered the torments of Tantalus. Tired out and tortured with thirst, the soldiers gave Monge and Berthollet no credit for showing as much endurance as themselves. On the contrary, they were irritated by the bearing of these ‘ Pekinese ’ (civilians), whose presence in their ranks they were unable to understand, and they imputed to them the responsibility for the expedition, which at the moment they were cursing. They took revenge by christening the Egyptian donkeys ‘ savants.’

At Ramanieh, Monge and Berthollet embarked with other

civilians, including Bourienne, Bonaparte's secretary, and Sucy, the *ordonnateur en chef*, on the xebec *Le Cerf*, the flagship of a flotilla which was going up the Nile as far as Cairo, under the command of Rear Admiral Perrée. The journey by water was no more exempt from perils than the journey on horseback had been. On July 14th, a little short of Shebreiss, where Bonaparte was fighting Murad's troops, the flotilla was met by seven armed boats, and came under their fire, as well as that of a considerable native force massed on the river banks. In spite of their age and their inexperience of arms, Monge and Berthollet stood the fire with admirable courage and coolness, like old soldiers, and their courageous behaviour during the very hot fight, from which the flotilla was not finally relieved until the arrival of Bonaparte, brought them special praise from the general-in-chief in one of his letters to the Directory: 'It is impossible to refrain from mentioning the savants Monge and Berthollet . . . who showed that, when there are enemies of the *patrie* to fight, every Frenchman is a soldier.' After escaping from this imminent danger, the flotilla proceeded amid great difficulties to Shebreiss, amid incessant skirmishes with the hostile riverside population. Exposed to the bullets of the natives, with no news of the army, living on water melons and water, the passengers on board the *Cerf* endured worse privations and alarms than in the sands of the Libyan desert. Finally, on July 21st, they came into sight of the Pyramids and heard the guns; then, next day, they inferred from the cessation of the firing and the Mameluke corpses floating down the Nile that Bonaparte had won a victory. They were not mistaken: he had just won at Embabeh the battle known as that of the Pyramids. Admiral Perrée had intended to moor at Boulak, the port of Cairo; but the Nile was still so low that the *Cerf* stuck in the sand. Monge, Berthollet, and their companions on the journey were transferred to a *djerme* or native boat, and landed at Gizeh. There they found the general-in-chief, who told them that he had abandoned the pursuit of the Mamelukes at Shebreiss in order to rescue them.

Their colleagues who had remained at Alexandria had



been entrusted to the care of Kléber by a letter from Berthier, dispatched on the eve of his departure for Cairo. 'It is indispensable,' he wrote, 'that these savants and artists should have someone to protect them, to whom they can apply; they will be pleased at your kindly taking over this office.' Three of them, the mathematician, Fourier, the engineer Costaz, and Dolomieu, the great mineralogist, were designated by name as the mouthpieces of the community to present requests as needed. Kléber's new wards were permitted to remain on shore or on board ship as they preferred, and the necessary steps were to be taken by the commanding officer and the intendant to provide for their housing and maintenance. On the following day, however, Caffarelli had announced to General Menou, commanding at Rosetta, that by Bonaparte's order a certain number of them 'savants, artists, and young men of great promise,' would follow Menou to his residency: 'Will you kindly instruct one of your officers,' he wrote, 'to defend their lodging, their properties, and their subsistence against violence, as they have no means of defence.' After this recommendation, which, like Berthier's instructions to Kléber, erred only in not having been made at the moment of landing at Alexandria, Caffarelli informed Menou that Costaz would present to him the list of his future civil subordinates, with a statement of their salaries and their relative ranks as compared with army officers.

Accordingly, soon after Monge and Berthollet had left with Bonaparte, twenty other members of the Science and Arts Commission, who were to accompany Menou to Rosetta, left Alexandria in their turn, with no regrets. This group included among others the mathematician Fourier, the littérateur Parseval-Grandmaison, the painter Vivant-Denon, the naturalist Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, the botanist Nectoux, the musician Villoteau, Villiers du Terrage, of the Polytechnique, the engineer Jollois, and the draughtsman Joly. The sea was so rough that Menou, who had Vivant-Denon with him, was horribly sick, and hurt himself by knocking his head against the breech of a gun. The caution of the captains, who had no knowledge of the coast,

prolonged the journey more than was comfortable for the passengers, who were distributed between several sloops and gunboats, sleeping on deck and, since they were not entitled to be victualled on board, supporting themselves on what they had brought with them.

When they came in sight of the *boghaz*, the bar which permitted only shallow boats to enter the Rosetta arm of the Nile, the passengers entered dinghies or Nile gunboats, which took them upstream to Rosetta. 'In these multiple transshipments and removals,' writes Villiers du Terrage, 'several of us have already lost our belongings.' At Rosetta no quarters had been prepared, at all events for the majority : Villiers and his companions spent another night on deck in their gunboat ; some at least of them went ashore and brought back bread, and fruit, 'superb black grapes,' which did something to help the travellers to forget the privations of the past two days. Next day, at dawn, they explored Rosetta in search of a shelter, and found none ; returning from their vain journey to the spot where they had left the vessel, they found that she had gone : their belongings were by the riverside. They sat down in the shade of their baggage and lunched on fruit ; then they returned to the town in search of lodgings, some remaining to keep watch over the baggage. They received little help from the privileged ones, like Fourier, Parseval-Grandmaison, and Denon, who were already comfortably housed ; only at the end of the day did they learn that a dwelling had been allocated to them. They installed themselves there and lived together at little expense, with their rations ; they were served by three Maltese slaves and a French servant. In spite of the discomforts of their arrival, Rosetta, in comparison with the life on board and the stay in Alexandria, found favour in their eyes. It was not the Eden praised by the explorer Savary ; but they found 'delicious milk,' good water, excellent fruit, game in abundance, and lemon and orange groves, advantages of which they made much in their letters to their comrades left in Alexandria.

Thus the members of the Science and Arts Commission were now split up into three groups—two only, but the

most eminent of all, were at Cairo with Bonaparte ; twenty at Rosetta with Menou ; the remainder, much the most numerous group, were with Kléber at Alexandria, where the French and Arabic printing equipment had been landed and set up and was already at work. Nobody was idle. Some found opportunities at once for applying either to scientific or to practical work the talents on account of which they had been selected to accompany the army to Egypt. Others, who had not yet found that opportunity, were otherwise utilized, according to their aptitudes. Bonaparte entrusted Monge and Berthollet with administrative functions. With ex-Consul Magallon they formed the commission set up for the seizure of the properties of the Mamelukes, the collection of direct and indirect levies, and the conservation of national properties and storehouses. As members of this commission, which was called the Administrative Commission, they had to occupy themselves with the farming out of the Customs, and the reconstitution of the Cairo Mint, of which they were appointed inspectors. Bonaparte also employed them on the preparation in Cairo of the future scientific installations of the Science and Arts Commission ; they were made jointly responsible with Caffarelli for selecting the premises in which the French and Arabic printing plant should be installed on transfer from Alexandria, and also a chemical laboratory, a physical laboratory, an observatory, and an Institute.

At Rosetta the mathematician Fourier and the *littérateur* Parseval-Grandmaison, together with the ex-Knight of Malta Le Groing, formed the 'Commission of Three' which arranged the purchases of supplies for the army and the fleet. The composer Villoteau, 'wanting some occupation,' served as secretary to Menou, who highly appreciated his services, as well as his relations with Denon, Nectoux, and the other savants or artists attached to his command. The agricultural expert Nectoux examined 'everything connected with agriculture.' Denon took sketches, and drew monuments, types, and landscapes, and also the animals and plants studied by the naturalists and botanists. Among the naturalists Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire was one of the most eager

workers. 'General Menou,' he writes, 'has given me an escort with which to bury myself in the Delta and hunt there in safety. I have found many interesting birds; my work has been to observe their habits, describe them zoologically and anatomically, stuff them and set them up in skeleton.' The botanists were less fortunate, and complained of having found no more than twenty different species.

It was naturally at Alexandria, where there was most to do and where they were most numerous, that the members of the Science and Arts Commission were busiest. The architects occupied themselves with the project, soon abandoned, of a monument dedicated to the memory of the French who had fallen in the assault on the town. Three of them, Norry, Protain, and Peyre, were entrusted with the preparation of a barrack dwelling, of which they supplied plans and specifications to Kléber. Two civil engineers, Girard and Le Père, were put in charge of the inspection of wells; three others, Bodard, Faye, and Chabrol, were entrusted with the work of repairing the canal from Ramanieh to Alexandria. In the important task of mapping the town officers of the military engineers collaborated with civil engineers, ordnance survey officers, and astronomers. Before the construction of the first windmills was begun at Cairo, Conté, assisted by Cécile, both mechanical engineers, built furnaces at Alexandria for the manufacture of cannon-ball, in order to provide for the defence of the town in case of attack by the English. These two engineers also provided Kléber with a fire float. Thus the aptitudes of the members of the Science and Arts Commission were brought under contribution, some of them for pacific and some for military tasks. After witnessing their activities Kléber came to value their services so highly that, when the order reached him to send them to Cairo, he began by turning a deaf ear, and then asked permission to retain some of them temporarily in order to complete work in progress. But the capital was intended to be the headquarters of the technical services and learned bodies represented on the Science and Arts Commission, as of the government and the general staff, which directed and utilized their activities.

Bonaparte had had two sets of printing plant brought with him to Egypt, one official and the other private. The official one was that of which the material had been supplied by the Imprimerie Nationale and the staff recruited from Paris, and completed at Rome by Monge, whom Bonaparte had placed in charge of this duty. It possessed French, Arabic, and Greek type, and was subdivided into two sections, one Oriental and the other French, united under the name of 'Imprimerie Orientale et Française.' It was under the direction of the orientalist J. Marcel, who had under his orders an assistant overseer, Baudoin, three readers, Besson, Galland, and Puntès, and eighteen operative printers, in all twenty-two persons brought from Paris, to whom were added the technicians engaged by Monge at Rome, in the Vatican or its environs, for their knowledge of oriental languages—Don Elia Fatalla, interpreter, ■ native of Diarbekir, who was placed in charge of the oriental printing establishment, two overseers, three compositors, and three printers.

The private printing plant was that of Citizen Marc Aurel, son of a printer and publisher of Valence-sur-Rhône, whom Bonaparte had known when he was stationed there. The future emperor, then a simple artillery lieutenant, used to go to read the books in the Aurels' shop and work in the library of Aurel senior, a cultured man and the founder of the first paper to appear in the department of Drôme, *La Vérité au Peuple*. Marc had continued his father's business, but had carried it on at an early date with the armies, since we find him in 1793 as printer to the army of the Alps, and in the following year attached to the printing establishment of the naval army of the Mediterranean, on board the *Sans-Culotte*. When Bonaparte left for Egypt Marc Aurel followed him with his presses and his type, but as an independent printer, with no official status.

Marcel's printing press was embarked on board the flagship *Orient* and began working on passage. Among other French documents printed by it were Bonaparte's proclamation and army order dated 3 and 4 Messidor (June 21st and 22nd); it also printed in Arabic the

proclamation to the inhabitants of Egypt which the general-in-chief intended to have distributed among the native population at his first contact with it, and which was actually published the day after the occupation of Alexandria—on July 2nd. Thus the official printing press of the expedition began work before landing, and printed on passage not only several French documents but the first one in which Bonaparte addressed the Egyptians in their own tongue. It may be that Marc Aurel's press, which was embarked on another vessel, printed some French document on passage, but certainly nothing in Arabic; it had no Arabic type.

Before leaving Alexandria on July 7th, Bonaparte had given orders that 'the French, Arabic and Greek printing presses are to be landed'—that is to say, the presses under Marcel's direction. Bonaparte left behind a staff officer to carry out the operation, and directed that the precious presses should be installed, with their accessories, 'in the house of the Venetian Consul.' In his impatience to see the presses ready for working, he had directed that within forty-eight hours they should be capable of printing in French or Arabic anything that might be sent from headquarters during the march on Cairo and thereafter. As its first task he had demanded from the Arabic printing press, 'the moment it has been set up,' 4000 copies of his proclamation to the natives.

It is very probable that Marcel's printing apparatus was landed before the date of this order (July 7th) of Bonaparte's; for the squadron had left its moorings off Alexandria in the night of July 5th–6th to make for Aboukir, and the *Orient* had set sail on the morning of the 7th. Moreover, a first publication for the use of the army, a 'currency tariff' 'printed at Alexandria, by the Imprimerie Orientale et Française,' was dated 18 Messidor, year VI (July 6th). It must be inferred that, less than a week after the capture of the town, the printing press of the expedition had begun working in some temporary premises, instead of the comfortable house in which Bonaparte had directed it to be set up, before he left for Cairo.

As for Marc Aurel's press, there is no trace of its working

at Alexandria. 'Though it was installed within forty-eight hours in the land of the Pharaohs,' says an account of this printer, his press 'may not have worked in the conquered city, since it was sent on to Cairo.' With its owner, it followed in the train of the army in the march on the capital, where it is recorded that it was at work from August 15th. It may be assumed that Bonaparte had decided to leave at Alexandria for the time the more perfected but less mobile of the expedition's two printing establishments, and to content himself to begin with, with that of Marc Aurel, which enabled him to have his orders printed in French in Cairo, leaving the Arabic printing to be done under Marcel's supervision at Alexandria.

This, at all events, is what happened. Until the end of 1798 the *Imprimerie Orientale et Française* remained at Alexandria, where it had done the first printing in Egypt in French and continued to do the only printing in Egypt in Arabic. It was this press that brought to the valley of the Nile the art of printing, which had never been practised there before July 1798. After the capture of Cairo this art, totally unknown to the Egyptians until the day when Marcel revealed it to them at Alexandria, was imported into their capital by Marc Aurel, who set up his presses there for the use of headquarters. To him belongs the credit of having been the first to print at Cairo, the heir of Memphis, though only in French, while it is to Marcel and his collaborators that the honour belongs of having been the first to print in French and Arabic in the city founded by Alexander the Great. A very great and useful invention was thus introduced by the French into Egypt, at Alexandria in July and at Cairo in August.

The savants of the expedition—and, no doubt, many also of the military—were aware of the service they were thus rendering to this country, in which the contrast between the ignorance and barbarism of their day with the civilization of the past constantly impressed itself on their minds. If the account of Marc Aurel already mentioned is to be believed, it was on August 15th that the first general orders were printed in Cairo. He did the composing himself, as Marcel,

on board the *Orient*, had done, with the first copy Bonaparte had given him for publication—the general-in-chief's proclamation to his troops. Marc Aurel's start at Cairo was something of an event for those of the scientists who had already reached the capital—according, at all events, to a tradition clearly based on the printer's own statement. 'Monge, the chemist Berthollet, the mathematician Fourier, and the mineralogist Dolomieu, were gathered round his case in almost religious contemplation. They fixed their eyes on him, following the progress of his work with inexpressible interest. When the first proof came out from under the press they were in ecstasy; they tore it from Marc Aurel, who was as moved as they themselves, to read it, to regard it with enthusiasm, as though it was a thing they had never before seen; then they went out, waving it, still damp, above their heads, and shouting again and again "*Vive la France!*"'

Imagination may well have heightened and dramatized the scene in retrospect, and added to the names of the illustrious men who were present as witnesses or participators; but the story is entirely credible, although these enthusiastic savants, to be quite consistent, should have gone into their ecstasy six weeks earlier, around Marcel's case, since it was in July, at Alexandria, that 'Gutenberg's wonderful art' had been 'revealed to the ancient civilization of Sesostris.' But no doubt material anxieties, the search for a site, and the hunt for their effects and their material among the impedimenta landed, had prevented them at that time from giving to the starting of the *Imprimerie Orientale et Française* at Alexandria the attention the event merited; thus their enthusiasm had been able to keep its freshness for the inauguration of Marc Aurel's printing shop at Cairo, where his art was, moreover, even more exotic than in a Levant port.

Marc Aurel thereafter assumed the title of 'printer to the army,' and retained it until he left Egypt; he placed the title after his name on all the documents issued from his press. From the date of its installation at Cairo, he printed the general orders transmitted to him by headquarters, and also



two periodicals started at Bonaparte's instigation, a daily paper, *Le Courrier de l'Égypte*, and a literary and scientific review, *La Décade Égyptienne*. We shall return shortly to these two publications.

But, either because Marc Aurel's work did not give full satisfaction, or because there was work enough for both presses, the general-in-chief soon found it necessary to bring the Alexandria plant to Cairo. He wanted to have it close at hand, especially as it was the only one with Oriental type. To send everything that required printing in Arabic two hundred miles from Cairo, several days' journey down the Nile, was bound to prove an unpractical system. On August 2nd Bonaparte instructed Berthollet, Monge, and General Caffarelli du Falga to choose a house in which to install various scientific establishments, and gave first place in the list to 'the French and Arabic printing presses.' It may be inferred that it was his intention, from the moment of his arrival at Cairo, to install Marcel's establishment there as a permanent arrangement. It is evident that he had been concerned to find a site for it since he had instructed his chief of staff a few days earlier to send for it. 'Give orders,' he wrote to Berthier on July 27th, 'for the French and Arabic presses to be brought here as soon as possible.' Berthier seems not to have known where the presses and their staff were, for on the same day he requested General Menou to 'send the French press by the quickest and safest route, if it is at Rosetta.' But 'as soon as possible' and 'the quickest route' did not prove soon or quick. For some reason, it is not clear what, Bonaparte's instructions, usually so promptly obeyed, were carried out on this occasion only after a long delay, and even he seems to have resigned himself to patience. A month later Berthier wrote to General Kléber : 'One of the things we need most is one of the two Arabic printing presses.' Yet he waited still a long time, and it was not until October that Marcel and his staff and their French, Arabic, and Greek type reached Cairo ; the final organization of what was thereafter called the *Imprimerie Nationale*, the national printing establishment, was completed only in January 1799.

Before its transfer to Cairo and its change of title, Marcel's establishment continued to work at Alexandria under its original name of *Imprimerie Orientale et Française*. Kléber made use of it for the needs of his command and for the work ordered by headquarters, while Marcel published from it the 'Military Penal Code for all the Troops of the Republic,' and two little works of his own, an 'Arabic, Turkish, and Persian Alphabet,' for the use of his staff, and 'Reading Exercises in Literary Arabic, with Extracts from the Koran, for the Use of Students of the Language.' These two little manuals, one technical and the other educational, were the first books printed in Egypt, the forerunners of the abundant literary output since produced in the country. The cradle of Egyptian printing is to be sought in the *Imprimerie Orientale et Française* of Alexandria.

Bonaparte always had a high regard for the press, provided, of course, that it was official. He had had a newspaper for the army in Italy, edited by Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angély, *La France vue de l'Armée d'Italie*. Regnault had also been at Malta and had published a newspaper there.

Immediately after the capture of Cairo, when Marc Aurel had scarcely had time to unpack his cases of apparatus, Bonaparte decided to found a French newspaper, *Le Courier de l'Egypte*. It was to appear every fifth day, and to give local news and news from Europe, in both cases carefully selected; it was to meet the need for keeping the army in touch with what was happening in the colony and abroad, bringing to the capital an echo of the life of the provinces, and to the provincial towns an echo from the capital; finally, it was to guide the opinion of its readers. The editor and his staff were appointed by Bonaparte himself. Parseval-Grandmaison, a man of letters, was proposed as editor, but declined the post; it was given to the mathematician Fourier, then at Rosetta; until his arrival a fortnight later his place was filled by the engineer Costaz. The first issue of the *Courier de l'Egypte* appeared on 12 Fructidor, year VI (August 29th, 1798), printed by Marc Aurel, who a little later solicited customers and subscribers through the following

advertisement: 'Citizen Marc Aurel informs his fellow-citizens that the price of his *Courrier* is six medins, and the subscription for thirty numbers 150. He will accept no subscription unless it is paid in advance. He requests citizens outside Cairo who wish to subscribe to prepay their letters and the money. Subscriptions are payable at the address below.' There followed the stamp of the printing works and his address: 'At the quarters of the French.' This little announcement, which bears witness to the publisher's shrewd commercial sense, sounds a modern note never before heard in Egypt: publicity here made its first appearance. And as well-ordered publicity begins with itself, its first appearance was in the service of the paper which acclimatized it in the Nile valley.

Bonaparte informed Kléber of the appearance of the paper, and sent him a copy to Alexandria: 'You will find herewith the first issue of the *Courrier*, which is appearing here. If you still have an Arabic printing press at work, have the article about the festival of the Prophet printed in Arabic and distributed throughout the Levant. You will send me 400 copies.' This shows the interest the general-in-chief took in the new-born *Courrier* and the use he purposed to make of it in the service of his policy, by publishing the facts he desired to be generally known. An article of interest to the natives could at any time be translated into Arabic and issued as a tract.

Berthier was also interested in the newspaper created by his chief, and himself recommended it to Kléber. But Kléber was not captivated by the first number he received. 'The editing of your Cairo paper,' he wrote, 'is not attractive enough to give the prospect of many subscribers. At least make it write French!' It was a hard judgment on the staff of the *Courrier* and their interim editor, Costaz. Fourier reached Cairo in September in time for Costaz to turn the paper over to him after the publication of the fourth issue.

In any case, the paper found buyers and subscribers less purist and less severe than Kléber. The paper had the inestimable advantage of having no rival; and, either out of

its own revenues or with the aid of government subsidies—a question which has so often arisen since with other papers—it came out fairly regularly as a semi-official or even official newspaper. Kléber himself, in spite of the cold reception he originally gave it, kept it on when he succeeded Bonaparte as head of the army. He relieved Fourier of the editorship and entrusted it to Desgenettes, the chief medical officer of the army; Desgenettes was the third and last in this series of improvised journalists. A few weeks before this, Marc Aurel, whose defective type-setting may well have been responsible for the literary faults blamed on the editorial staff, had packed up and left with his high protector, selling his press to the state and transferring to the *Imprimerie Nationale du Caire* the publication of his *Courrier*.

One hundred and sixteen issues, of four quarto pages, published—nominally—each *quintidi* and *décadi*, each fifth and tenth day of the Revolutionary ‘decade,’ make up the complete collection of this newspaper, in which the readers found the principal official documents, a succinct chronicle of events in the army, in Cairo, and in the provinces, reports of such festivals as those of the Nile, the Prophet, and the Republic, accounts of Bonaparte’s military reviews; advertisements of amusements organized to break the monotony of existence, plays, concerts, public balls, and so on; advertisements of establishments set up, cafés, beershops, bakeries; ‘varieties,’ poems by Galland, overseer in the *Imprimerie Nationale*, and by Benaben, one of the literary men of the expedition; news from Syria, from Palestine, and, finally, from Europe, when any came through the meshes of the English blockade—and of the French military censorship. In its political section the *Courrier de l’Egypte* was more or less tendentious on occasion; this was one of the things for which it was there.

It did not disdain to lend its columns to rather fulsome praise of the *général en chef*, as witness this ‘Impromptu on the Capture of Malta,’ to be sung to the air *Jeunes amants, cueillez des fleurs* (‘Young lovers, gather flowers’):

Comme sur terre, sur les eaux  
Bonaparte couvert de gloire,  
De l'Anglais bravant les vaisseaux  
Parle et commande à la victoire,  
Et nos intrépides guerriers,  
Malgré Pitt, le diable et les anges,  
A Malte, des saints chevaliers  
Gaiement vont manger les oranges.

(‘ Alike on land and sea Bonaparte, covered with glory, braved the English ships and commanded victory, and our intrepid warriors, in spite of Pitt, the devil and the angels, gaily went to eat the oranges of the holy knights at Malta.’)

The succeeding lines of this impromptu ironically congratulated the knights for having discreetly got out of the way of the French soldiers :

Ils leur ont dit en gens courtois :  
Citoyens, vous pouvez faire alte !  
Nous renonçons à tous nos droits,  
Vous êtes souverains dans Malte !

(‘ They said to them like gentlemen : “ Citizens, make yourselves at home ! We renounce all our rights, you are sovereigns of Malta ! ” ’)

The singer of the exploit ended by drawing the most optimistic conclusions from this first triumph :

Eole, conduis nos vaisseaux !  
Mais quelque part qu'on les attende,  
Que quelques-uns de nos héros  
Par toi soient poussés vers l'Irlande !

(‘ Aeolus, guide our vessels ! But wherever they are awaited, let some of our heroes be driven by you towards Ireland ! ’)

To address to Aeolus so confident an invocation, only a few weeks after the naval disaster of Aboukir, required trust in the spirit of the reader. But, as we have said, the clientèle of the *Courrier* had no other paper to which to turn.

Another foster-child of the Muses sang the praises of Bonaparte in the columns of the *Courrier*, on the anniversary of ■ day of the Revolution on which, as general of the home forces, he had defeated the reactionaries in Paris :

Salut, immortelle journée  
Dont les mémorables bienfaits  
A ma Patrie ensanglantée  
Ont rendu l'espoir et la paix.  
Ton nom à tout Français rappelle  
D'une horde esclave et rebelle  
L'attentat et le châtement.  
Salut à l'immortel génie  
Qui d'une affreuse tyrannie  
Brisa le coupable instrument ! . . .

(' Hail, immortal day whose memorable good deeds gave back hope and peace to my ensanguined Mother Country. Your name recalls to every Frenchman the crime and punishment of a horde of servile rebels. Hail to the immortal genius who broke the culpable instrument of a frightful tyranny !')

This time the *Courrier* revealed the name of the new Pindar, Benaben, to whom these strophes were due : ' They do honour,' it said, ' to the talent and the patriotism of the author, still a young man, who gives promise of being a pleasant singer and an energetic champion of the cause of liberty.' This promise was scarcely fulfilled, and there is nothing surprising in that.

From time to time the paper printed sketches and little stories intended to make the French acquainted with prejudices or beliefs of the people with whom they had to deal. The painter Rigo had selected Nubians to serve as subjects for the portraits Bonaparte had ordered ; on seeing their

image on the canvas, they had been seized with terror and had fled helter-skelter from his studio, exclaiming : ' He has taken my head ! He has taken my arm ! ' " A story circulated among the Mussulmans of Cairo of a holy personage of the city who claimed to have had revealed to him a conversation between Mahomet and Destiny, at the moment when the French fleet was approaching Egypt. ' Destiny,' said the Prophet, ' can it be that you are delivering up to Infidels the loveliest of the countries under the law of the Koran ? ' ' Prophet,' replied Destiny, ' the decree has been pronounced, I no longer have power to prevent its execution ; but take courage, for I have decided that these conquerors shall become Mussulmans.' This revelation, the paper declared, was credited in Cairo, where, it added, there were eight soothsayers of repute, often consulted and always believed. It may also be, though the *Courrier* did not say so, that there were means of inspiring these precursors of Madame de Thèbes.

The *Courrier* had very little space to spare for the work of the ' Institute of Egypt,'<sup>1</sup> which had just been founded at Cairo. It devoted only a few lines to the meetings of the Institute, and even that not always. This was plainly not to the interest either of the members of the Institute or of their colleague Bonaparte. They had no intention of concealing their studies and deliberations under a bushel ; nor was it to the interest of the authors who addressed to the Institute communications which they considered worthy of attention. To meet the need of publicity for the reports of their meetings, and for the papers they wrote or received, a second periodical was started, a scientific and literary review. Its organization was decided on at the first meeting of the Institute. For its title Caffarelli proposed that of the semi-official organ of the Class of moral and political sciences of the Institute of France—*La Décade Philosophique*. But another title, less servilely copied from the first, was preferred : *La Décade Egyptienne Journal Littéraire et d'Economie Politique*. Desgenettes was charged with the supervision of the printing of the review ; his place was taken

<sup>1</sup> See next chapter.

by Fourier when the Syrian campaign took him away from Cairo. Tallien, ex-member of the Convention, drew up the prospectus which served as a preface to the new publication.

The prospectus did not confine the *Décade* to the labours of the Institute, but extended its pages to anything that benevolent collaborators might be good enough to offer it, so long as they did not treat of politics, the only forbidden subject. Apart from politics, which was thus prudently ostracized, 'everything in the domain of the sciences, the arts, and commerce, general and special, of civil and criminal legislation, and of moral and religious institutions, will be accepted,' said Tallien enthusiastically. The publication he announced was thus a review without any specially defined field; it was to be scientific, literary, artistic, economic, and philosophic, even giving room to practical information, for example, on climate and diseases. The spirit inspiring it was the same as that which inspired the Institute and each of its workers: 'The conquest of Egypt must be useful to France not only politically and commercially: the sciences and arts must also profit by it. . . . The aim we are setting ourselves is to make Egypt known not only to the French who are now there but also to France and Europe. Up to the present the resources of this celebrated country and even its topographical situation have not been well known.' And, after enumerating the circumstances that stood in the way of the investigations of European travellers before the French occupation, this man of Thermidor turned publicist continued: 'To-day all is changed: now that we are masters of the whole of Egypt, it is easy for us to examine the customs and usages of the country, to ascertain with the utmost precision the nature of the climate, the quality of the productions of the soil, the existing state of agriculture, and the improvements possible; we can go in safety to visit the ancient monuments, and to observe with care the marvels and singularities of nature. Thus will the errors of ignorance and the exaggerations of enthusiasm be rectified.' This is the same language we have already met and shall meet again from the pens of so many remarkable men, who became the collaborators of the *Décade*.



Its first number appeared on ■ Vendémiaire, year VII (October 1st, 1798), and was announced the same day by the *Courrier* in these terms : ‘ Citizen Marc Aurel will place on sale to-day the first number of the *Décade Egyptienne*, ■ literary periodical which in future will appear every ten days. Each number will be composed of two-and-a-half or three sheets octavo. The price will be twenty *sous*, French money, or ten *livres* for twelve numbers. Subscriptions may be sent to the address below.’ But Marc Aurel, though then the only printer in Cairo, did not long retain the printing of this periodical. Bonaparte wanted it very carefully produced, and entrusted it to Marcel’s Imprimerie Nationale on November 24th, beginning with the fourth number.

In spite of the promises in its prospectus, the *Décade* confined itself to publishing accounts of the meetings of the Institute and—sometimes *in extenso* and sometimes, when they were too long, in part only—of the papers read before that learned assembly. It made no effort to obtain other matter, no doubt because this was sufficient to fill its pages and because the consideration of articles from all sources would have occupied too much of the time of its editor, which was already taken up with a thousand other things. It thus constituted the printed collection of proceedings of the Institute of Egypt which the naturalist Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire was anxious to send to his friends in Paris before they had received that of the Institute of France. Its three volumes, dedicated successively to the three generals-in-chief who commanded the army one after another, do in fact present ■ summary of the work of the Institute of Egypt in all its variety, though at times a rather severely technical one ; and this summary was to remain the only printed evidence of that work until the publication in Paris by Didot, between the years VIII and XI, of the four volumes entitled *Mémoires sur l’Egypte*. The *Courrier* and the *Décade* were the first parents of all the periodicals that have since appeared in Egypt, in French, Arabic, English, or Italian.

Among the innovations introduced by Bonaparte into Egypt, printing was the one best appreciated, or least misunderstood, by Egyptians of any education. The Im-

primerie Nationale du Caire was the establishment which aroused the friendliest curiosity, or the least idle, among some of the cultured natives. The principal members of the Divan, the sheiks El Mohdy, El Fayoumi, and El Savi among others, visited it several times, interesting themselves in the processes of printing in French or Oriental languages. The sheik Mohammed El Fasy, who had seen the printing works at Constantinople, and Syrians who knew of a press in a Maronite convent in Lebanon, agreed that the Cairo establishment was superior to those two, the only ones the East had possessed up to then. The sheik El Bekri waited until 1801 to see Marcel's presses. He asked a number of questions on the influence of printing on civilization, and said that he knew a large number of good Arabic works of which the publication was desirable. The most intellectual of the ulema, sheik El Mohdy—'the most scholarly and best informed, a man of wide reading,' Napoleon said later—became friendly with Marcel, who translated his Arabic stories into French and published them in Paris in 1836 with lithographs and vignettes.

A French master printer, who has studied the beginnings of his art in Egypt, enumerates twenty-one works, large and small, or documents which came from the presses of Marc Aurel or Marcel between 1798 and 1801. In addition to those which we have already mentioned, one may note Marcel's translation of the *Fables de Loqman, surnommé le Sage*, a Grammar of spoken Arabic for the use of French and Arabs, a description of ophthalmia in Egypt, by Antoine Salvaresi, in Italian and Arabic, a memorandum on the prevalence of smallpox, addressed by Desgenettes to the Cairo Divan, in French and Arabic, an *Annuaire de la République Française calculé sur le méridien du Caire, l'an VIII de l'ère Française*, a *Notice des Evènements qui ont eu lieu en Europe pendant les quatre premiers mois de l'an VII de la République*, the Constitution of the year VIII, the report of the trial of Kléber's assassin, and an Arabic newspaper started by Menou, *El Tanbysh* ('Information'). In addition there were a large number of official documents, general orders, proclamations, and administrative circulars,

sent for printing from the general staff or from the finance department. Documents of this nature made up the bulk of the output of the Imprimerie Nationale, which was primarily a branch of Headquarters. Some of the documents, for instance the Circulars of the paymaster general of the Egyptian army, were sufficient to make up a fairly fat volume. Still more numerous were the general orders issued by Bonaparte, Kléber, and Menou. Today the archives of the French Ministry of War, the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, the British Museum, and the royal library at Cairo are the only depositories of all or part of these printed papers, which were set up in circumstances that render them stirring even when their text is not, and often it is.

## VIII

### *A COLONIAL ACADEMY AT CAIRO UNDER BONAPARTE*

IN AN order dated August 2nd, 1798, Bonaparte directed that a building should be selected in Cairo to house the printing press for the army in Egypt, a chemical and a physical laboratory, and an observatory. The mathematician Monge, the chemist Berthollet, and General Caffarelli, commanding the Engineers, were charged with the execution of this decision ; and the order added : ' There will be a hall for the Institute.'

Thus Bonaparte had conceived and perhaps adopted, before he left Paris, the idea of creating at Cairo an Institute of Egypt, on the model of the Institute of France, which was then called the Institut National, and of which Bonaparte was a member ; and he had scarcely become master of Cairo when he set about putting the idea into execution. He was very proud of the freedom of their community which the men of science of his country had accorded to him in electing him to membership, and signed his proclamations ' Bonaparte, *Général en Chef, Membre de l'Institut National.*' He intended that the mission accomplished in France by that learned body, to which he was proud to belong in virtue of his membership of the Academy or 'Class' of Sciences, should be fulfilled in Egypt by the similar establishment he was founding in Cairo.

For the membership of the Institute of Egypt Bonaparte had no need to go outside the Science and Arts Commission, since all branches, engineers, physicists, mathematicians, chemists, mineralogists, naturalists, agricultural experts, architects, painters, archæologists, orientalists, Arabic

scholars, physicians, astronomers, composers, men of letters, and poets, were represented on the Commission, often by men of the highest capacity and standing. All he needed to do was to make a selection of the most eminent of them and to add to them a few administrators and officers, to have an Academy built up in accordance with the sacramental recipe. The Institute of Egypt would be distinct from the Science and Arts Commission, and would contain its cream.

It was not yet constituted when, to satisfy Bonaparte's impatience, the question of quarters for it was considered. Its founder proposed at first to have it next door to the general staff offices, on the Ezbekieh, the principal square in Cairo, where the army headquarters had been established. But the plan of reserving to it no more than a hall, in a building on the Ezbekieh to be used for the printing plant, was soon replaced by another, that of assembling all the scientific establishments under one roof, away from the centre of the city. The Science and Arts Commission would be housed with the Institute in a single building, and their annexes would be grouped round it. 'We have everything needed,' wrote the naturalist Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, just arrived at the capital, 'for the formation of the National Institute of Cairo; two great buildings, next door to one another, are to be employed for the purposes to which the Louvre has been allocated in Paris. The assembly hall is being decorated, our quarters are being prepared; our organization will soon be perfected.' The site chosen extended over a collection of Arab palaces and gardens, in the suburb called Nasrieh. One of those who were most frequently there, the orientalist Jomard, has given this account of the place where these establishments stood, and their contents: 'The *Institut d'Egypte* and the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* occupied a small quarter not far from Sitty-Zeinab and the canal. There were the meeting hall, the library, the chemical and physical laboratories, the menagerie, the botanical garden, the engineering workshops, and so on. The members of these groups inhabited the houses of Quassim Bey, Hassan Kashef, and several other

persons. A large open corridor in Hassan Kashef's house had served for the tracing of a great meridian, constructed with the utmost care by the astronomers.'

Bonaparte's order of August 2nd did not mention all the institutions Jomard here mentions, and this list is not complete. It was in order to add to the chemical and physical laboratories and the observatory, which were all that were at first envisaged, a library, a botanical garden, ■ menagerie, engineering workshops, a natural history collection, ■ mineralogical collection, and archæological collections, that the decision was made to house the Institute on a grand scale and to give it plenty of space—in several buildings 'on the edge of the country, in the midst of big gardens,' wrote the painter Vivant-Denon, 'where we enjoyed delicious tranquillity . . . in time of peace.' Thus it was suddenly decided to set up a number of scientific establishments, which were organized in a relatively short time. Few plans have been drawn on a more generous scale than that of the grandiose construction of which the Institute of Egypt was to be the keystone. Few ideas have been more elevated than that of endowing Egypt with such an instrument of material and moral advance.

Only after the choice of site had been made and the installation begun did Bonaparte proceed to the foundation of the Institute. His order of August 20th instructed Monge, Berthollet, General Caffarelli du Falga, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, the engineer Costaz, Desgenettes, and General Andréossy, to meet on the following day, at 7 a.m., 'to draw up regulations for the organization of the Institute of Cairo and to designate the persons who should compose it.' At this meeting the articles were drafted of a decree of Bonaparte's, promulgated on August 22nd, which was the actual document constituting the Institute. 'There shall be in Egypt,' said this document, 'an Institute for the sciences and arts, which shall be established in Cairo. This establishment shall have for its principal objects: (1) the progress and propagation of knowledge in Egypt; (2) the research, study, and publication of the natural, industrial, and historical data of Egypt; (3) to give advice

on the different questions on which it shall be consulted by the government.' The succeeding articles divide the Institute into four sections, those of mathematics, physics, political economy, and literature and art, each composed of twelve members; and regulate the order of meetings, the composition of the committee, the presentation and publication of papers read to the members, and the preparation of reports asked for by the government. Two prizes were to be awarded annually for works on two subjects to be announced for competition, 'one for a question relative to the progress of civilization in Egypt, and the other for a question relative to the advancement of industry.'

The decree thus revealed the intention of turning the foundation of the Institute to the profit not only of the army and the French occupation but of the country in which it was at work. Bonaparte took the initiative which sprang from this generous intention on the day after his entry into Cairo, while suffering from the naval disaster of Aboukir, and at a time when the campaign on land was still only beginning.

In the course of the meeting at which this decree was drafted, the phalanx of seven illustrious recruiters, to whom Bonaparte had entrusted the selection of their colleagues, drew up the list of members of the learned company, spread over the four proposed sections. The list stood finally as follows : *Mathematical section* : Bonaparte, Fourier, Costaz, Nouet, Quesnot, Le Père, Girard, Le Roy, Andréossy, Say, Malus, Monge. *Physics section* : Berthollet, Dolomieu, Conté, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Descotils, Savigny, Dubois, Desgenettes, Champy, Delile. *Section of Political Economy* : Caffarelli du Falga, Gloutier, Sucy, Sulkowski, Tallien, Poussielgue. *Literature and Arts Section* : Parseval-Grandmaison, Venture de Paradis, Norry, Dutetre, Vivant-Denon, Rigel, Redouté, and a Greek priest, Don Raphael de Monachis.

Thus only one section, that of mathematics, reached its maximum strength of twelve members; in the three others vacancies were left for filling later. The great majority of the members were taken from the Science and Arts Com-

mission. The army was represented by Bonaparte, Generals Caffarelli and Andréossy, Commandant Say, chief of staff of the Engineers, and Sulkowski, A.D.C. to the general-in-chief; the health service by Desgenettes and Dubois; the administration by Sucy, *ordonnateur en chef*, Poussielgue, administrator general of finances, and Gloutier, administrator; the Eastern clergy by Don Raphael de Monachis; politics by Tallien. So faithful was the application made in Cairo of the consecrated recipe!

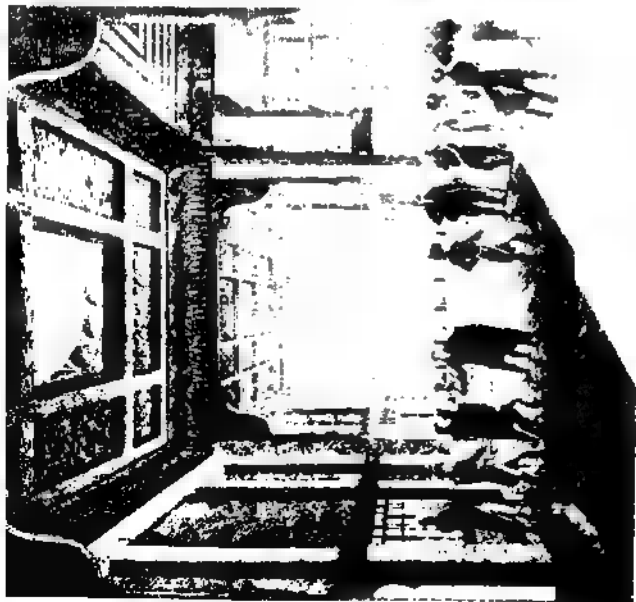
How natural was the pride of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, as a young savant less than thirty years old, in being able to write 'our colleague Bonaparte'! And it was no less a subject of pride to have been made, 'by the choice and order of the *général en chef*,' one of the seven privileged personages 'appointed to indicate to him the persons who should become part of the Institute.' What significance in these few words to his father: 'I was myself one of the small elective body!' One feels the satisfaction, with a tinge of condescension, in these lines to Cuvier: 'I used my influence to gain the admission of my good friends Savigny and Redouté.' The entomologist Savigny and the flower-painter Redouté were in any case worthy of the honour his friendship has helped them to obtain; and, in this as in other cases, personal sympathies (is there an Academy in which they are banned?) were never allowed to count except in the service of genuine merit and title. The selection, in fact, was sufficiently judicious and impartial for Academician Bonaparte, as colleague but at the same time arbiter, to be able to approve without modification the list that had been sent to him twenty-four hours after the order calling for it.

Some members of the Science and Arts Commission considered that the majority of the members of the Institute of Egypt were not worthy to 'unlace the shoes of Monge and Berthollet.' Certainly the superiority of these two was incontestable; but the judgment that estimated their colleagues so meanly was over-severe. Academic consecration is subject to belittlement in all latitudes, and it was so in the latitude of Cairo.



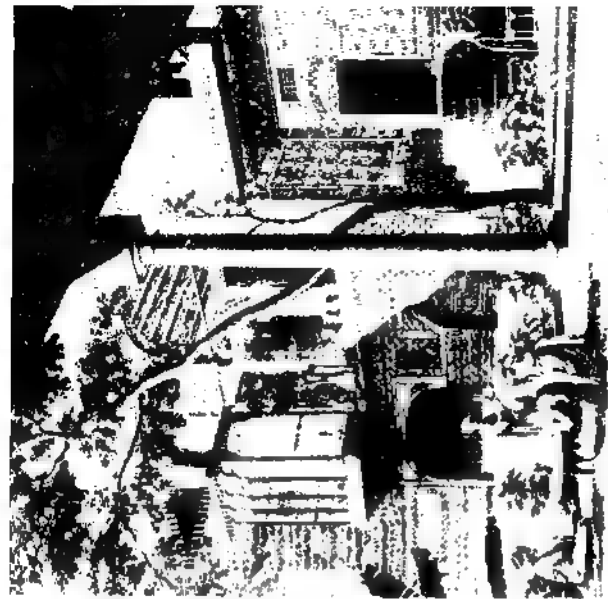
On August 23rd the home chosen for the Institute, the Commission, and their subsidiaries, only awaited its new occupants. Most of them were still kept waiting at Alexandria and Rosetta. The first to arrive were ravished with their residence. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire described its charms to Cuvier in these dithyrambic terms : ' Our houses seem to offer us perhaps more comforts and at least as much magnificence as is to be found at the Louvre. An immense garden, about thirty-five acres in extent, well planted, with a number of raised terraces never reached by the Nile in its inundations, is to serve for cultivation and as a botanic garden.' In the work of adapting the dwellings and land to their new purposes, priority had been given to the building in which the Institute was to hold its meetings. ' The assembly hall,' said Geoffroy, ' is already filled with the richest furniture found in the houses of the Mamelukes : among them one may notice one of the largest and finest clocks of Berthoud and a very large Japanese vase.'

Although a good third of the members of the Institute had not yet reached Cairo, the first sitting took place on August 23rd, 1798. Bonaparte had been impatient for this inauguration and had himself fixed the date for it, charging Caffarelli with the convocation of those of his new colleagues who were present in the capital. He attended it with Berthier. Monge was elected president and the mathematician Fourier permanent secretary. Bonaparte contended himself with the vice-presidency, wishing by this application of *cedant arma togæ* to establish from the outset the principle of academic equality : there the general-in-chief was no longer anything more than ' citizen Bonaparte.' But, as citizen Bonaparte was none the less to be head of the army and of the country a few moments later, he was not long in making use of the competence of the Institute for the solution of questions of interest to the administration and the government. The minutes of the first sitting include no less than six questions raised by Bonaparte and referred ■ commissions composed



BONAPARTE'S ARRIVAL AT THE INSTITUTE  
OF EGYPT

*Engraving by Protein*



QASSIM BEY'S PALACE. SEAT OF THE  
INSTITUTE OF EGYPT

*By Balzac, engraved by Benoit and Texier*

*From the 'Description de l'Égypte'*



of the academicians best qualified to answer them. They concerned the means of improving the baking of bread, of building wind or water mills, of purifying the Nile water, and of collecting views on the native jurisprudence, judicial system, and education.

It might be a matter of indifference to the Egyptians that science should furnish means of making beer without hops, or distasteful to them to have to find local resources for the manufacture of gunpowder, which was not intended for them unless they revolted; but the first four questions put by Bonaparte were of no less interest to them than to their European masters.

In our days the formula 'referred to a commission' is too often the equivalent of a distinguished burial. But it was not so at Cairo with the problems submitted by Bonaparte to his colleagues in the Institute. The commissions appointed to examine and solve them went to work at once. From the day following the inaugural sitting they exercised their wits to discover practical solutions. Replies were furnished to all the questions put, and in some cases with a promptness that might serve as an example to innumerable modern Parliamentary commissions.

These inquiries under orders, moreover, were far from exhausting the list of activities of the members of the Institute. They applied their faculties spontaneously to a number of other subjects, communicating in turn to their colleagues the results of their observations, and their discoveries. The Institute was thus no sooner born than it became the centre of the individual activities of its members, and also of the studies to which the technicians not admitted to academic honours, and officers of the army, devoted themselves. The intellectual activities which resulted from the foundation of the Institute have been summarily described as follows: 'This learned body multiplied its sittings and brought into play a mass of emulation. In this noble struggle none of the rivals was ready to be outdone in speed or information; hence the vast number of papers and reports that signalized the early days of the nascent institution.' During the months

of Fructidor and Vendémiaire of the year VI-VII (from the end of August to the beginning of October 1798), not a sitting but was marked by several readings, followed by discussions. It would be difficult to find sciences neglected amid the extreme variety of these communications. It requires an effort of the imagination to recall that columns were still marching through the provinces which had not yet submitted, that the whole country still resounded with the clash of arms, while the guests in the palace of Quassim Bey listened to a paper from Monge 'on the optical phenomenon known by the name of Mirage,' or to his description of 'a specimen of the stone of which the masonry of the castle of Cairo is composed,' or to a dissertation from Berthollet on 'the formation of ammonia' or on 'the processes followed in Egypt in the manufacture of indigo,' or a discourse from Andréossi on 'the manufacture of the saltpetre and powder of the country ;' to Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire communicating his 'observations on the wing of the ostrich,' to Sulkowski, A.D.C., describing 'the route from Cairo to Saleyeh' and calling for the transport to Cairo of 'a bust of Isis and two stones covered with hieroglyphics,' to Desgenettes discussing 'the prevalent ophthalmia' and 'the health of Egypt,' to the architect Norry giving an account of 'the proportions of Pompey's Column,' with a drawing by his colleague Le Père, to Savigny describing 'a new species of nymphæa,' to Costaz explaining 'the variations of the colour of the sea,' to Dolomieu applying geology to the solution of a problem of ancient geography, the site of ancient Alexandria, to the ex-Consul Beauchamp telling of a voyage he once made from Constantinople to Trebizond, to the orientalist Marcel translating an Arabic ode on the conquest of Egypt by the French, to the poet Parseval-Grandmaison declaiming his alexandrines, stately in their fluency, on a theme taken from Tasso—and so on. *J'en passe, et des meilleurs*—these are but a few out of many outstanding papers.

It would not have displeased the Richelieu of the Academy of Cairo to receive a little flattery from it, preferably in

verse. Parseval discreetly chose his texts for translation so as to provide opportunities for slipping in a few transparent allusions, which all his hearers would grasp, to the victor in so many battles. But the victor would have preferred more direct praises, and before long he let the versifier know it.

What an act of faith in the success of the campaign and in the future of the colonizing enterprise were these readings and discussions at the Institute of Cairo, and what a homage to, what worship of the purest and highest ideal! Never before or since has such an intellectual harvest made its appearance so rapidly in similar military and political conditions. To appreciate this, it is necessary to realize the spirit in which not only the civilians enrolled by Bonaparte but some of the officers of his army came to Egypt. One of his aides de camp, an enthusiast for economic geography, wrote: 'The conquest of Egypt is opening a new field to literature. All our ideas on this interesting country are continually expanding. And geography may be the first to benefit from our labours.' And this Frenchman by adoption, for the A.D.C. was Sulkowski, a Pole by birth, concluded with this phrase, prophetic of the methods of the great modern French colonizers, Bugeaud, Galliéni, Lyautey: 'The rapid mapping of localities, and their relation to military movements, will serve in future times to guide the steps of the merchant, and perhaps to expand the industry of the French ploughman.'

It would be possible to multiply indefinitely the evidences of this ardour, this thirst for learning and teaching. Though it may seem no more than a catalogue, mention must be made of some of them, chosen out of a hundred others equally telling. Desgenettes, in an administrative circular, wrote to the officers of his health service: 'Egypt is the reputed cradle of medicine, as of the rest of human knowledge;' and then, after recalling the names of learned Arab authors of past treatises on medicine, he continued: 'There must exist, and I have already found them, traces in Egypt of this ancient science. Study carefully, then,

the practice of the country. Poor as your opinion may at first be of this empiricism, it is necessary to be acquainted with it in order to be entitled to judge it.' General Menou was anxious 'that all the birds not yet sketched should be painted for the work projected by the Government.' The work projected by the Government was the *Description de l'Egypte*, which did not begin to appear until 1809, but the plan of which had been drawn up in July 1798 or perhaps earlier. In place of Redouté, on whom he had counted, Menou entrusted this work to another artist 'who has been continually accompanying him on zoological work.' The young savant of whom this was written, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, was himself in search of 'powder for shooting game,' to supply the table in which he was much the most interested, his dissecting table. He requested the dispatch from Alexandria 'of jerboas and wild rats'; he was impatient to announce some discovery to his colleagues of the Natural History Museum of Paris, that of a new species, perhaps, of extinct reptile or quadruped unknown to Lacépède, and was triumphant at being able to correct Cuvier and Brongniart in regard to the anatomy of the 'orni-cynocephalus.' He was a model of scientific zeal, in his element in the company of older men whom he took for his pattern and of comrades possessed of his own fervour: 'I am finding men who think only of the sciences; I am living in the centre of a burning focus of luminaries. . . . We are hard at work on all the questions that interest the Government and the sciences to which we have voluntarily devoted ourselves.' Contact with Egypt had filled them with a sort of intellectual fever. An artist, Vivant-Denon, who had been entrusted by the Institute with the examination of vestiges of the past, concluded his report with these words: 'Perhaps it has been reserved to the labours of Frenchmen to restore their annals to the Arabs.' Foreseeing something of the work of the Egyptologists and students of Arabic of the next century, he anticipated a reconstruction of history through the manuscripts which might be discovered, through the light to be thrown on antiquity by the reading of hieroglyphs and the study of

monuments, and through 'literary research on the reign of the khalifs.' Thus an end would be made of the gap in history made by 'those centuries of torpor in which we have found Egypt, but which the labours of the Institute, under an enlightened government, will without doubt change into ■ new epoch.' The orientalist Marcel discovered among the Arabs 'a love of literature' which, he declared, 'is by no means extinguished,' and poetic aptitudes of which he found evidence in the narratives of their storytellers; and he demanded for 'the Arab muse a place in that literary empire in which up to the present the European muses have reigned almost exclusively.' The Arab muse led up to Parnassus by a French Academician of Cairo and received by her Western sisters—how admirable a subject for an allegorical picture it would have been, for decorating the hall of the Institute, with Berthoud's clock and the Japanese vase, and how thoroughly in accord with the spirit of the time!

Here were the orientalist discovering in the native, who was still separated from his educators by the barrier of his language, ancient titles of nobility, a few vestiges of culture, and certain inherited gifts of imagination. And this was not an exceptional happening. An intense curiosity, which had nothing to do with the idle curiosity of tourists, turned on the native the attention of the most diverse sciences. Medicine sought in him some memories of therapeutics; chemistry his dyeing processes; physics his application of mechanism to his industry; agricultural science his methods of working and irrigating the soil; and political economy his commercial usages and his conditions of social life. Artists' pencils dogged him in every attitude, in every occupation, in the workshop, in the fields, in the towns. There was no preconceived contempt for him as a being immersed in ignorance or enmeshed in an almost automatic routine: his very defects were charged against the servitude in which he had been kept by 'an oppressive government.' Profound interest and a sort of respect were shown for his country; and the sense of a debt which modern science has contracted towards ancient



Egypt, and which she must repay by extricating modern Egypt from her decline. An aphorism recurs frequently in the writings of the French savants : 'Egypt was the cradle of the arts and sciences. We owe it to her to restore them to the country of their birth.' So General Andréossy wrote at the head of a memorandum on Lake Menzaleh, for which he had drawn upon Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Abul-Feda, and d'Anville, and which led him to this conclusion : 'The sojourn of the army in this country will provide the means of rectifying many errors, dispelling many doubts, and re-establishing facts which, through the lapse of time and because the barbarity of governments had isolated them from all research, had fallen almost into oblivion.'

The researches, moreover, which the new government was encouraging were not inspired merely by the interest of the army, which had no need to identify the former branches of the Nile, to learn how the Delta had been formed and how it emerged, and so on. These were contributions to the advancement of the sciences, by the scientific study of the place whence they first arose in the past. This idea, that there was an obligation to Egypt to apply to her all the progress of science, was so firmly anchored in the minds of the French savants that one finds it expressed, almost in these identical terms, by several of them. The head of the ordnance survey, Colonel Jacotin, wrote later that cartographic work of the utmost possible perfection was needed for the army and the administration, and was, moreover, a debt owed to the country which was the cradle of geometry : 'A land so interesting as Egypt, where geometry was invented and put into practice for the redistribution of the land after the Nile inundations, certainly deserved the employment of present-day scientific methods for the determination of the bases of the map of the country. It was a sort of homage to it to carry out by these methods the operation entrusted to us.' Such was the spirit in which men belonging to the Institute of Egypt or who were subsequently admitted to it approached their task ; and that was why this establishment was able from

the first to be 'a burning focus of luminaries,' the centre of an intellectual activity that might excite the jealousy of more than one Academy.

Young Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire was astonished at this activity, and had good reason, in face of the 'abundance' of papers read, for speaking highly of the interesting nature of the sittings of the Institute. Can he be taken literally when, in comparing the parent Institute and its child, he declared the sittings of the Institute of Egypt to be 'at least as interesting as those of the Institute of France?' In any case, our Academicians of Cairo began to find emulation between themselves not enough, and soon instituted emulation with their illustrious colleagues of Paris. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire gave warning to Cuvier that the members of the Institute of Egypt were trying to send him the first volume of their Proceedings before the Institute of France produced its own. That did not prevent him from claiming that they deserved to receive the papers which had had the honour of being read at the Louvre, and pressing his master to send them for the guests at the palace of Quassim Bey. In exchange he sent his friends in Paris the *Courrier de l'Egypte* and the *Décade Egyptienne*, both edited by members of the Institute and the Commission.

The work of the Institute and the publication of the *Décade* gave evidence of the arrival at Cairo of 'immortals' or future 'immortals' who were not there when their Academy first opened its doors. Even before its first sitting the missing members were urged to come and occupy their seats. The members of the Science and Arts Commission had at first been divided into three groups, one at Cairo, where Monge and Berthollet, the earliest arrivals, had been joined by a few of their civilian colleagues; the second at Alexandria, and the third at Rosetta. The group at Alexandria, fifteen in all, had found in the end, thanks to Kléber, suitable quarters in the house of the Venetian consul, and were sufficiently satisfied with their lot and their occupations to resist the pressure from friends who had vaunted the charms of Rosetta. There the members of the Commission,

twenty civilians, had chosen quarters in the house of citizen Varsy, a French merchant ; they were living well there, thanks to the productions of the Delta, which supplied them in abundance with milk, grapes, and game. ' Three Maltese slaves ' had been assigned to them ; these free citizens seem to have accepted the services of the slaves without demur. The delights of this existence were not without their drawbacks, since the painter Joly, who had accompanied Menou in a reconnaissance, was killed. However, thank God, this fatality was the only one, and even imprudence was not in every case fatal.

But on August 21st Bonaparte had begun to give orders to assemble the whole legion of savants at Cairo. Three days later he gave precise instructions to his chief of staff, Berthier : the whole of the savants and artists were to be summoned to Cairo, with all the engineers not actually engaged on specific tasks at Alexandria or Rosetta. Together with this categorical order, the dalliers received from their comrades at Cairo pressing appeals to join them and enthusiastic descriptions of the joys awaiting them in the capital. ' Magnificent quarters, immense and marvellously planned gardens, abundant waters running on all sides with a soft murmur, a multitude of trees of different species offering voluptuous shade, the society of all the generals, and particularly that of the *général en chef*,—this is what you are refusing,' wrote Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire to Redouté ; and he concluded with this unanswerable argument : ' An academic chair opens its arms to you here.' But as an academic chair, however flattering and comfortable, could not take the place of a whole suite of furniture, the missing members were charitably given to understand that the first arrivals were seizing all the best to be found : ' If you delay, you will find no more furniture ; the first arrivals are sharing the spoils taken from the poor beys.'

While under the orders of Kléber and Menou, the ' Pekinese ' (civilians) had made themselves so useful to the two generals that both of them wanted to keep the gentlemen with them, or at least not to lose them all. Menou had had reasons to expect the coming order, and had tried to

parry the blow : ' Pity a man,' he wrote to Caffarelli, ' who wants to find someone who can speak French and with whom he can talk intelligently in the evening, after he has been labouring all day long.' But Caffarelli was not to be moved ; in face of orders from Bonaparte, Menou must forego his evening entertainment, those learned literary discussions of which he was so fond. He received once more a formal order from the general-in-chief, through Berthier. Kléber was more fortunate when, as an argument for the retention of the ordnance survey officers and civil engineers, he urged the desirability of completing the work on the map of Alexandria ; but not when he generously supported the petitions of some who preferred repatriation if they must leave the port.

Willingly or not, the civilian staff who had remained in the provinces formed into caravans to travel to the Nile and go upstream to the capital. They were followed by the balloon corps, which left on September 7th. ' It will consequently have time,' wrote Kléber, ' to prepare for the ascent which is no doubt expected of it.' Bonaparte was, indeed, counting on the balloonists to give the Cairenes the spectacle of a *Montgolfière*, a fire balloon display. Rosetta and Alexandria thus gave up to Cairo their phalanxes of experts and artists—who, no doubt, were curious to see whether it really was only at Quassim Bey's that genuine ' Elysian fields ' were to be found. In September the general reunion was completed, and after that it was from there, from that headquarters of the sciences and arts, that detached missions went out in all directions through the country, according to the tasks and inquiries and studies imposed by the Command.

Soon the public services constituted with the members of the great Commission were definitely installed or finally organized, completing their staff as members arrived. Civil engineering was placed under the direction of Le Père the elder, with Girard as deputy ; the ordnance survey was directed by Testevuide, and later by Jacotin ; the manufacturing service was placed under Conté, with Cécile as deputy ; the powder works were administered by Champy

the elder. The Mint at Cairo, one of the few establishments Bonaparte had found in existence and sufficiently well equipped to be worth utilizing, received a permanent director in the person of Bernard. At the same time the groups, broken by the dispersion of the first two months, of those whose activity was to be exclusively or mainly scientific or artistic, were reconstituted—astronomers, chemists and physicists, architects, designers and engravers, zoologists, botanists, mineralogists, orientalists, and so on. Many of them, however, had to carry on their academic studies jointly with some work of public utility more or less connected with their speciality.

The installation of the subsidiaries of the Institute and the Commission, begun at the end of August, was proceeded with and in many cases completed. It did not take long to set up an aviary, with which Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire declared himself better satisfied than with that in the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, and a menagerie, for which the young scientist sought curious animals in the properties of the Mamelukes, and of which he had the satisfaction of seeing the population rapidly increase. Next came the turn of a *jardin de naturalisation*—what would now be called an experimental garden, the direction of which was entrusted to Raffeneau-Delile. Before the beginning of October the physical and chemical laboratories were complete, as originally proposed, and also a natural history collection, to which other installations and collections were subsequently added. Bonaparte insisted on the utility of an observatory, and at his request the astronomers, with the collaboration of Caffarelli and the architect Norry, chose ■ site. Finally Conté organized engineering workshops and provided them with material.

How many civil and military services drew upon these workshops! Every improvement to be introduced in the very primitive industrial or agricultural equipment of the country depended on them, until the time came when they had successors. Even in the learned colony at Quassim Bey's, who was there that did not look to them for some

of his instruments of work, if not for all? The greater part of the machines and tools for the army, and particularly the bulk of the Commission's scientific apparatus, had formed the cargo of a vessel that foundered, and were lost with it. Consequently everything had to be begun again on arrival, and manufacture undertaken with improvised material in these engineering shops. This load of responsibility fell upon Conté, member of the Institute of Egypt, of whom Napoleon said later: 'He was a man equal to anything—equal to creating the arts of France in the midst of the deserts of Arabia.' To create the arts of France out of nothing was just what had to be done, if not in the midst of the deserts of Arabia, at all events on the banks of the Nile, where until then nothing of the sort had existed.

Conté was the founder of the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers (Schools of Arts and Crafts) at Paris, and director of the balloon park at Meudon, and had left for Egypt as head of the balloon brigade. He retained that command, but was intended from the first in Bonaparte's mind for the role of *deus ex machina* which only a past master of the mechanical arts could fill. It was to him above all others that the mission was assigned of 'bringing the arts of Europe to a semi-barbarous, semi-civilized people, destitute of industry and of scientific enlightenment.' He had scarcely landed when he began to display the inventive genius he was known to possess and the talent for improvisation by which the French race has so often since made up for its natural lack of foresight. The navy, the army, and the civil administration all benefited from his extraordinary resourcefulness. The very highest opinion was held of his fertility of invention, his boldness of initiative, and his technical skill. In placing him, by Bonaparte's order, in charge of the engineering enterprises, Caffarelli wrote: 'The profound study you have made of the arts has led the *général en chef* to entrust this mission to you.'

Conté justified Bonaparte's confidence in his talents over and over again. His engineering workshops were mounted and at work by the end of the year VI. Their output was astonishing; they supplied all that was asked of them

and even things nobody would have dreamed of asking : surgical instruments for the hospitals, telescopes for the astronomers, compasses and pencils for the draughtsmen, lenses and microscopes for the naturalists, machinery for the printing works, for powder manufacture, for minting, for tanning, precision instruments for the engineers and the topographers, foundry material, steel, cardboard, glazed tiles, sword blades, trumpets for the cavalry, cloth, even hats ! How rare and astonishing a spectacle must this vast enclosure of the Institute have offered when—alongside the Noah's Ark which Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire was trying to reconstitute in his menagerie and aviary, the botanical garden in which Raffeneau-Delile and Nectoux were sowing or planting their specimens, the laboratory in which Berthollet, Champy, and Descotils handled test-tubes and retorts, the physical laboratory and natural history collection in which Dolomieu examined his minerals and Savigny his insects, the study in which Monge, Fourier, Malus, and Corancez had set up their blackboard, the observatory in which Nouet, Méchain, and Quesnot inspected the firmament, the library in which Marcel, Venture de Paradis, and Panhusen translated Arabic manuscripts, the studios in which Vivant-Denon, Dutertre, Casteix, and Rigo set up their easels, and Norry, Blazac, Protain, and Lancret their architects' tables—there was also established this universal supply works in which Conté, Cécile, and their assistants produced to order a large part of all that human industry has learnt to make !

This establishment had the same subsidiary purpose as all the others—to instruct the native, to set an example, to regenerate the country and increase its prosperity. Fourier, in his historical preface to the *Description de l'Egypte*, states that under the French occupation 'the application of mechanical and chemical theories made remarkable progress at Cairo,' and recalls that 'within the same area as the great buildings devoted to the sciences, all the elements had been assembled which could assist the development of industry.' He praises Conté for having 'given to Egypt some of the most important arts of Europe.'

The engineering shops were only a particular manifestation of the general idea at the base of all the work of the members of the Commission and the Institute, the idea which Fourier defined as 'the project of bringing back to the banks of the Nile the sciences so long exiled,' and of which he depicted the realization in this formula, concise as the title of an allegorical picture: 'The sciences, after long exile, see their mother-country again and prepare to embellish it.'

But in the industrial domain more than any other, to instruct other people and to instruct oneself are two terms which Bonaparte did not separate from one another. To watch the native at work was the first condition for perfecting his methods of work. And Caffarelli requested Conté 'to observe all the processes in the mechanical and chemical arts employed in the country, to collect notes and drawings relating to this subject, and to introduce the improvements suggested by your inventive genius.' Conté was careful not to neglect this part of his task: he studied the processes used by the Egyptians, their tools, their utensils, their looms, and their oil and flour mills; he visited the native workshops in Cairo, drew with admirable exactitude and consummate art more than fifty scenes showing artisans at work—as his personal contribution to the *Description*;—and still found time in his leisure moments to make sketches of types and costumes. His activity was tireless and of extraordinary diversity, for he did not allow his responsibilities for industrial management to interfere with the supervision of his balloon brigade, which was manufacturing fire balloons and aerostats for sending up on festival days. He was no less adept in the practical than in the theoretical field: having conceived the idea of a machine he would make it himself. But on emerging from the forge where he had been at work with his hands, realizing in iron his idea and design, he might be seen busy with the inquiry into local industry, wresting from the exact sciences the principle and formula of a new invention, or experimenting with an earlier one.

The reunion of the members of the Commission and their



mutual neighbourhood enabled them to collaborate in a way which, in view of the exceptional quality of their principals, was remarkably fruitful. Living together and animated with the same goodwill, they pooled their talents. And when these talents were those of a Monge, of whom Bonaparte said that he had 'all the sciences in his head and all the arts in his hand,' or a Berthollet, who in the opinion of the same judge was 'the pillar of the expedition and the soul of the colony,' or a Fourier, who had deservedly been chosen by the members as permanent secretary of their Institute and was appointed later to direct the scientific and artistic exploration of Upper Egypt—what would not the joint efforts of such an élite bring forth? Thanks to the mutual aid of the experts, to the harmonious co-operation of the various technical services created by Bonaparte, and to the labours of the small commissions of four or five members specializing in different branches and grouped together for particular purposes, a sort of permanent collaboration was established between all categories of sciences and arts in order to realize the general-in-chief's schemes. Architecture selected and transformed the buildings intended for service as hospital, gunpowder factory, mint, printing works, or brewery; chemistry indicated the raw materials furnished by the country and the processes of manufacture; physics and mechanics furnished guidance in the working up of materials; geometry and astronomy were drawn upon by geography, painting and drawing by botany, zoology, and ethnography; the ordnance survey corps, the civil engineering corps, and the military engineers, lent mutual support in information and staff for the work of canalization and of urban mapping, for which all the material available in civilized countries was lacking. It was a spectacle the natives had never before witnessed, a spectacle capable of revealing to them how the association of all human capacities can replace rule of thumb by progress in the life of a people.

The works already prepared for by the members of the Commission while at Alexandria and Rosetta were then begun, extended, and methodically carried out—those of the map of Alexandria, finished within three months, and

of the map of Cairo, begun by Coraboeuf and Jacotin in the middle of September ; both maps were made with the assistance of the astronomers Nouet and Méchain. The civil engineers Le Père and Jacotin, and Testevuide, the head of the ordnance survey, began the preparatory work for the general map of Egypt, for which the data collected by numerous collaborators, military and civil, in the course of marches, operations of conquest and pacification, or surveys, were received and dealt with at Cairo. And as Cairo had scarcely been taken when the occupation began to be extended rapidly up and down stream, the material for the map flowed in without delay in the ordnance officers' sketches. But the military operations did not bring profit only to the map ; they also increased the knowledge of the irrigation system and the network of canals, of that ' medical topography of Egypt ' of which Desgenettes traced the programme to his medical staff, of the properties of the climate and the products of the soil, of the habits and institutions of the population, of the archæology of the country, and of its fauna and flora. A mass of documents began to accumulate on each of these subjects, while the field of observation went on growing. Before long civil missions were attached to the detachments of troops, but already certain officers were sending information to the savants. ' Several of them consecrated to the progress of the sciences all the leisure the military operations left them,' wrote Fourier ; and this scientific activity lasted throughout the officers' stay in Egypt. One day Berthier sent to the Institute, as a gift from Monge, ' a hundred birds' mummies, preserved in sealed sandstone pots ' ; a commission was appointed to examine them, including Bonaparte and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire ; the latter brought out of one of these vessels the entire skeleton of an ibis.

While still confined to Cairo and its immediate environs—where they were unable, however, to move about without an escort—the savants worked on this harvest of observations and material. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire attacked the fish of the Nile, after having made a hecatomb of birds, and he was no more tender with the snakes or any other animal

species. Savigny made 'a copious collection of insects,' and promised not to return 'without bringing a multitude of worms'; 'entomology,' said one of his companions, 'is yielding him ■ rich harvest.' The botanists regretted that so far they had had only 'a poor crop,' but hoped for an early revenge: 'they declare that the plants now coming on will yield them a larger number of species.' Delile, to relieve his impatience, studied 'the palm-tree which bears the fruit called Domm.' The mineralogists were still poorly provided for: 'there is nothing here but sand and Nile mud.' At all events, they analysed this famous mud, of legendary fertility; and they studied the limestone of 'the mountain called Mokattam, composed entirely of nummulitic shells.'

Sometimes some of the learned phalanstery were taken on an excursion organized to visit the ancient monuments in the neighbourhood of Cairo; the artists, architects, and draughtsmen were then in their element, and the pleasure was no less for those for whom the excursion meant an incursion into the domain of art and archæology. 'Some on horseback, some on donkeys,' they would set out for Heliopolis by way of Matarieh; at the head of the caravan would be Caffarelli, Andréossi, Monge and Berthollet. The younger members, like Villiers du Terrage, would take with them books written by travellers who had preceded them to these famous spots. The competition was still greater for places in an excursion to the pyramids at Gizeh: two students of the Polytechnique, Villiers du Terrage and Dubois-Aymé, invited themselves to the trip, which required rather elaborate preparations and thus could not be made often. To make sure of being in the party, they passed the night before its start in one of the vessels which were to convey the guests of the general-in-chief to the neighbourhood of the journey's end. For Bonaparte himself was leading the party this time. He remained at the foot of the Great Pyramid, watching while most of the others scaled it, and chaffing Berthier, who became out of breath and gave up when half-way to the top. Old Monge was



ENGLISH CARICATURE BY GILLRAY OF THE INSTITUTE  
OF CAIRO (*above*)

*Author's collection*

ANONYMOUS GOUACHE PAINTING REPRESENTING  
BONAPARTE'S GENERAL STAFF AT THE SUMMIT OF  
THE GREAT PYRAMID (*below*)

*Bibliothèque Nationale*



the first to reach the platform on the summit, and comforted the less valiant by pouring out glasses of brandy. The excursionists went on to have a look at the Sphinx ; so many compositions have since represented Bonaparte face to face with it, in an attitude of theatrical interrogation. Then they visited the interior chambers of the Great Pyramid, where Vivant-Denon, the future *Conservateur* of the Louvre museum, remained for some time. The general-in-chief did not enter the pyramid, because it was necessary to go on all fours to get through the entrance, an attitude for which he had no taste. The day left some of them disappointed with what they had seen, but the most competent observers were full of admiration both of the Sphinx and of 'those gigantic monuments of which it may be said that they are the last link between the colossal works produced by art and by nature.' Denon, whose words these are, declared that he had come back from his excursion 'morally and physically exhausted, feeling my curiosity about the Pyramids more provoked than it had been before I directed my steps to them.' Appetites had been whetted by this experience, and a visit to Sakharah was planned ; it was made a little later, and Memphis was carefully explored. There was another return to the Pyramids, or rather, others went in their turn, profiting by the curiosity of one or another of the generals and their escorts.<sup>1</sup>

Since Bonaparte had been to the Pyramids, it was impossible for his contemporaries to suppose that he had not mounted to the top of them, and, of course, of the highest one, or that he had not entered the chamber in which Pharoah's mummy rested. Hence the title of a drawing of the time : 'Bonaparte, First Consul (*sic*), on the highest of the Pyramids of Egypt.' Hence also an engraving which represents him discussing with sheiks by torchlight in front of a sarcophagus. But these are simply works of imagination.

These visits to the ruins were a diversion for Villiers du

<sup>1</sup> Kléber, in particular, went to the Pyramids on 16 Nivôse in the year VII (January 1799), taking with him Girard, Malus, Jollois, Villiers, and others.

Terrage, Dubois-Aymé, and some others of the younger members of the Commission, amid their preparation for the leaving examination of the Polytechnique. They sat for the examination at the beginning of October, before a board presided over by Monge, and composed of professors of the Polytechnique, like Fourier, and of the Ecole Centrale, like Costaz and Corancez. Thus our members of the Institute were examiners for the Polytechnique, as at Paris. The candidates passed into the corps of civil engineers, the military engineers, or the artillery, their commissions being signed by Bonaparte and Berthier. Thus, after a few weeks of "cramming" during the bivouac at Alexandria, in the house of M. Varsy at Rosetta, and in the palace of Quassim Bey at Cairo, some of the annual promotions from the Polytechnique were to commissions as officers or to posts as engineers in Egypt.

The arrival of the Academicians who had missed the first sittings of the Institute brought it fresh strength and increased its capacity for its labours. Faithful to a method which it followed to the end of its existence, this body devoted its time partly to studies in pure science and partly to questions of practical utility. Thus we find it listening one day to a paper from Fourier, its permanent secretary, on 'the general solution of algebraical equations,' and on another day to a description by Fourier of 'a proposed machine moved by the force of the wind, which could be employed to water the land.' It was again pure science when Corancez presented to the Institute his 'précis of a new method for reducing to simple analytical processes the demonstration of the principal theorems of geometry.' But practical utility was the concern on the days devoted to considering the construction of a comparative table of weights and measures of Egypt and France, to compiling 'an annual giving the divisions of time according to French, Coptic, and Turkish usage' (that is to say, a comparative almanac), and to facilitating the composition of an Arabic vocabulary 'to put the French in a position to establish with the inhabitants of Egypt the communications required for the

common needs of life.' The Institute thus brought its own contribution to the adaptation of the European occupying force to the habits and language of the natives, and to rendering the relations of the two parties less difficult. And it did not lose sight of its ambition to spread professional instruction in the country, nor of the purpose which is essential to colonization, that of increasing the fertility of the country occupied, of opening new sources of wealth in it, and of teaching the native how to work them. Dutertre submitted to the Institute the project of a public drawing school, open to the natives ; the project was at once approved and filed. Nectoux described to his colleagues the great advantages offered by the creation of an 'agricultural establishment,' or even of several in various parts of the country, as 'national gardens,' for the perfecting of the very cultures, cotton, sugar cane, indigo, which have since made the fortune of Egypt. The educative intention was strongly marked in the arguments with which the botanist supported his proposal : 'Not only will it be possible,' he said, 'to distribute to the inhabitants a fairly considerable number of species, but to train pupils from among them who will be capable of making use of the treasure entrusted to them.' The labours of the medical men, whose reports kept fairly closely to the lines laid down in Desgenettes' circular, abound in evidence of this generous spirit of proselytism, this care for education, in the domain of medicine and hygiene, in which the native seemed to them to be, in nine cases out of ten, ignorant of the most elementary principles. One physician, after denouncing the ravages of infantile mortality, writes : 'Anyone who could spread in Egypt sound principles as to the physical education of children, and could succeed in getting them adopted and put into practice, would render a great service to the human race.' If, conversely, observation revealed in any branch of knowledge, medical, industrial, agricultural, or any other, an example worth following in the practices customary in the country, or a lesson to be drawn from them, no prejudice of any sort was allowed to prevent the French savants from drawing attention to it and profiting by it.

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The interest and admiration awakened by the first ruins met with at Alexandria and around Cairo aroused in the French savants and artists a laudable concern for the preservation of this historic and artistic patrimony of Egypt. It is true that their concern for it seems to have been united with ideas of its removal, which the circumstances generally prevented from being carried out. However that may be, the project of forming an archæological collection at the Institute (the collection never included many items, but was, for all that, the first attempt at a museum made in Cairo) revealed at once the necessity of maintaining certain principles in the transfer of antiquities taken from their age-long site. Dolomieu, as a mineralogist and traveller, was the likeliest of all to be interested in the travels of stones; he described to the Institute 'the precautions and the discernment which seem to be required in the choice, the conservation, and the removal of ancient monuments.' His colleagues adopted his conclusions, and assigned him some assistants for 'the careful collection of all the ancient objects they may be able to procure, distinguishing those which local interest renders worth attention but which could not be removed without drawbacks.' How many caterers for museums—and European museums—have since that time trampled under foot the scruple revealed in this incident!

General Desaix did not disdain to take an interest in antiquities in between the hard battles he was fighting with the Mamelukes in Upper Egypt. He discovered at Antinoë a statue of Antinous and one of Apollo, and sent them to Cairo. The fellah, however, who was entrusted with their transport found his load too heavy and unceremoniously threw Apollo overboard on the way! 'It is hoped that the statue will be recovered,' declared the optimistic *Courrier de l'Egypte*.

So much spontaneous zeal might have enabled Bonaparte to leave the Institute to follow its own devices. But what activity was ever able to satisfy the vice-president and higher protector of the Institute of Egypt? He was assiduous in attending its sittings, and referred to it a second whole

series of questions 'on matters special to Egypt and on the moral and physical improvements the country needs.' Could the vine be cultivated in Egypt? What was the comparative yield of wheat in Egypt and France? Was it possible to dig wells in the desert? What were the oscillations of the magnetic needle in Egypt? What repairs were needed to the aqueduct carrying Nile water to the citadel of Cairo? What was needed to put in repair the famous *mekyas*, the nilometer on the island of Rodah? And so on. These questions of general utility, all inspired by the desire to contribute to the well-being of Cairo and of Egypt, were submitted at once to a committee apiece. 'In bringing forward this series of questions,' it has been said, 'Bonaparte was demonstrating his foresight in regard to the future of his conquest.'

Clearly it was no sinecure to be an Academician at Cairo. Each sitting, and there were two every *décade* (ten days), added something to this programme of work; and even this did not exhaust Bonaparte's demands on the members of the Institute. Were they not at the same time members of the Science and Arts Commission, or officials of the administration, or soldiers, and as such at his disposal for any service for which he considered them fitted? Monge and Berthollet, although actively participating in scientific work, were none the less members of the Administrative Commission set up to assist the general-in-chief. This function did not prevent them from being, with their colleague Costaz, inspectors of the Cairo Mint, and in addition to that they were soon appointed commissioners attached to the General Divan of Egypt. Lancret was a member of the commission charged with the search for properties of the Mamelukes. Fourier took over from Costaz the editing of the *Courrier de l'Egypte*, passing on this duty later to Desgenettes, who was already editing the *Décade Egyptienne*; he made way again for Fourier on leaving for Syria. In the day of a Cairo Academician there was no hour for *far niente*. Bonaparte's successors continued on the same lines: under Kléber and Menou, Conté was a member of the Administrative

Commission, of the privy council, of the commission on researches of value to the navy, and of that on public festivals. Fourier was a commissioner attached to the Divan and a member of the privy council. These employments brought men of science to the political and administrative assistance of the government set up in Egypt, as veritable Jacks of all trades ; they willingly played this part in the service of France in wartime.

The services of Malus may be taken as an instance. He was a physicist, ex-pupil of the Polytechnique and of the Engineers' school at Metz ; later he became a member of the Académie des Sciences, and won fame by his theory of the polarization of light. As an officer of the Engineers he accompanied Bonaparte and later General Reynier in military operations. On return to Cairo he had the satisfaction of learning that he had been appointed a member of the Institute of Egypt ; but he had scarcely attended a sitting when he was sent to join Desaix in Upper Egypt and went up the Nile with him. ' In a savage hut in an advanced post of the army he prepared for the Institute a long paper on light,' in which he laid the basis of the discovery which later made him celebrated. He was back in Cairo at the end of Fructidor (mid-September), and was at once charged by Bonaparte with the organization, jointly with Lancret, later a colleague of his in the Institute of Egypt, and Jollois, officer of Engineers, of the national fête of the first of Vendémiaire in honour of the anniversary of the Republic. Like many another he was cast down by the naval disaster of Aboukir, and, consequently, little in the mood for either encouraging others to make merry or doing so himself ; but he had to carry out the very precise instructions Bonaparte had drawn up for the celebration of this memorable date. Within a few days there had to be got ready in Ezbekieh square the immense circus surrounded with pylons and furnished with a hexagonal pyramid in its centre, round which the troops of the garrison and the environs were to draw up in battle order, and which was to serve in the afternoon for French and Arab horse races. Many other members of the Institute and

the Commission found their talents drawn upon for this celebration. Rigo, a future Academician, painted in monochrome on the triumphal arch put up at the entry to the circus a picture of the battle of the Pyramids—a work of decoration which was a change from the drawings of costumes and types of which Bonaparte had just called for a collection from him. Parseval-Grandmaison, member of the Institute, wrote the words of the cantata of which one of his colleagues, Rigel, composed the music; it was sung after the Marseillaise and the *Chant du Départ* by a choir of soldiers. This was an unwonted exertion for Parseval, who had no energy for anything but the translation of Camoëns and Tasso into alexandrines. He was soon punished for his indolence in singing the praises of the hero, and sent in disgrace to Suez as head of the Customs! Monge, the President of the Institute, was requested to give the toast at the Franco-Egyptian banquet that terminated the day—‘To the perfecting of the human spirit and the spread of enlightenment.’ As for Bonaparte, he drank ‘to Year 300 of the Republic,’ which was to be a long way off, thanks partly to himself.

One more member of the Institute had to give assistance for this festival of the first of Vendémiaire, in which the general-in-chief wanted to include everything that could strike the imagination of the Egyptians. This was Conté. Jack of all trades if ever there was one, and magician in the eyes of the natives, he was to serve on this day in his capacity of head of the balloon brigade. He had hurriedly built a *Montgolfière*, a fire balloon, forty feet in diameter, and this was to be launched. But it was not ready on 1 Vendémiaire of the year VII, nor until 10 Frimaire. The launching so often postponed took place at last on that day. It was not a complete success. ‘The paper envelope,’ relates Jomard, officer of Engineers, ‘could not withstand the air pressure; it tore and was set on fire by the heating appliance. Seeing it descend in flames, the Egyptians inferred that it was an engine of war invented for setting enemy towns on fire.’ They had been badly frightened even at the sight of its rise, and had begun to run away.

These were not altogether the impressions which the unsuccessful ascent had aimed at giving them.

Less than a fortnight later there was another fête, this time in honour of 13 Vendémiaire : Bonaparte was interested in the celebration of this anniversary because the date marked the starting point of his prodigious fortune. It was a fresh occasion for official eloquence. Officers and civil officials could see to the prose ; but who would see to the verse ? Parseval-Grandmaison was silent—nursing his sorrows in the Custom house at Suez. His colleague Benaben prepared and set to music an ode which duly appeared in the *Courrier de l’Egypte* :

C’en était fait de ma patrie  
Si du héros de l’Italie  
Elle n’eût invoqué le bras . . .  
Héros, enfant de la victoire,  
Dont le bras sauva mon pays,  
Ta vie appartient à l’Histoire . . .

(‘ My country’s fate would have been sealed if she had not invoked the arm of the hero of Italy. . . . Hero, child of victory, whose arm saved my country, thy life belongs to History . . . ’)

—and so on. The verse was never very brilliant at the Cairo Academy.

No less than nine toasts were drunk at the banquet given on this thirteenth of Vendémiaire. Two of them at least were such as one or other of the members of the Institute would have been particularly qualified to propose : ‘ To the union of science and force ! ’ ‘ To the civilization of Egypt ! ’ The text of the latter expressed the noble ambition of making philosophic ‘ Reason ’ triumph in Egypt : ‘ We are giving the world the first example of a conquering legislator. Until our time, conquerors had always adopted the laws of the conquered. We are winning over them the triumph of Reason, a more difficult one than that of arms, and showing ourselves as superior to other nations as Bonaparte is to Genghis ! ’

The great native Mussulman festivals of the Nile and of the birth of the Prophet, which took place a little while before this, could not, it is true, have been celebrated as they were without the co-operation of engineers and artists in designing and carrying out the decorative schemes and the pavilions set up here and there, of orientalists and Arabic scholars in interpreting the speeches made by the general-in-chief and the principal sheiks, and in translating Arabic verses written for the occasion, and of artists whose drawings were to perpetuate the memory of these scenes. 'There has been a great deal of talk, even in Europe,' wrote Desgenettes, 'of the effect these festivals produced on the minds of the Egyptians. I declare positively, however, that they impressed the inhabitants of Cairo very little, in spite of all their magnificence.' Not that the people disdained to look on at them, or even to take part in them, or that they misunderstood the purpose of all the splendour. But the thing that was lacking was the effect Bonaparte expected them to have on the natives' attitude to the occupation. In this part of their task the engineers and architects and balloonists, and the painters, orators, and poets of the Institute of Egypt, wasted their efforts.

As for all the things useful and profitable to the country which had been done on Bonaparte's initiative by the Science and Arts Commission and the Institute, in every department of human activity, it was not to be expected that these should produce any immediate effect on the sentiments of the natives. Time was needed for the Egyptians to be able to realize the interest they had in the maintenance, repair, and perfecting of their irrigation canals, or the benefit of the improvements planned in their rudimentary economic equipment—the introduction of a regular administration, the working of public services hitherto totally unknown to them, the sanitary measures taken for the combating of epidemics and of plague, the orderly survey of the wealth of their soil, the conservation of the monuments of their history and evidences of lost civilizations—and of the labours, even those which appeared to be of purely academic interest, of the French savants and

artists. All this civil activity, practical and scientific, could make no immediate impression on the Egyptians of that time ; in spite of all the admirable ardour which characterized its beginnings, it was scarcely possible for them even to notice it. Later, and relatively soon, it attracted the attention of the most cultivated or least backward of them. Certain natives gave evidence of their esteem for the French savants, came to see Conté's workshops, watched Berthollet's demonstration of an experiment, or saw Marcel's printing presses at work. But these were at all times exceptions. On the whole the good done to Egypt by Bonaparte's colonial Academy was not realized by the inhabitants of the Nile valley until long after the death of the contemporaries of the Institute of Cairo.

## IX

### *BONAPARTE AND THE INSURRECTION AT CAIRO*

AT THE beginning of October 1798 the Egyptian notables came to Cairo from all over the country, to form a native assembly the competence of which was to extend over the whole of Egypt. Bonaparte laid down that their assembly should be known as the General Divan of Egypt, and that its session should open on October 5th. Thus, within the short space of a month a decision was carried into effect which the general-in-chief had adopted at the beginning of September, when he created the local divans of Cairo and the capital cities of the provinces occupied ; and a new institution saw the light, crowning a complete system of native consultative bodies.

Since nothing of the sort had ever before functioned in Egypt, it was necessary for the central power to have representatives attending the assembly to raise questions, follow the debates, and note the replies. This task was entrusted to two French 'commissioners.' The two selected were Monge and Berthollet, and their personal distinction is a measure of the importance Bonaparte attached to the General Divan of Egypt.

His instructions to Monge and Berthollet defined the purpose and traced the programme of the session. 'The purpose of the convocation of the General Divan,' wrote Bonaparte, 'is to try to accustom the notables of Egypt to the ideas of assembly and government.' This definition attests an educative purpose ; what had to be undertaken was the political education of the natives, and what they had to be taught was to deliberate in common on their country's affairs and to govern themselves. Here, from the



very outset, we have the culmination of the system of association.

A close concern for the public weal, and a positive appeal for the collaboration of the notables and for suggestions from them, were expressed in the general-in-chief's outline of what Monge and Berthollet were to say to the assembly in his name: 'You will tell them that I have summoned them in order to gather their advice and to learn what needs to be done for the good of the people, and what they would themselves do if they had the right which conquest has given us.' Never have consultative powers been defined in more general or broader terms, or terms more clearly manifesting the sincerity of the appeal for advice. The meeting of the Divan was not intended by Bonaparte to be merely a formality, or a farce. It was to be a first experiment in representative government, kept, as was only natural, within the limits of consultative attributions.

The questions on which the General Divan was to be consulted were very far from being insignificant. 'What would be the best organization to give the provincial divans, and what emoluments should be finally laid down? What organization of civil and criminal justice should be established? What laws would the Divan consider suitable for the safeguarding of inheritances and the removal of all the arbitrary elements at present existing? What ideas can it give us for improvements, either in the code of law relating to property or in the levying of imposts?' These four questions embraced a vast quantity of administrative, judicial, fiscal, and political matters. To convoke at the end of the eighteenth century an assembly of Egyptian notables to make suggestions to the central power as to provincial administration, the organization of justice, the régime of inheritance, the regulation of the law of property, and the collection of taxes, was to assign to it from the outset a mission of real importance.

The Divan was finally provided with officers elected by secret ballot and constituted in accordance with the rules observed in European assemblies—president, vice-president, secretaries, and tellers. In the course of its deliberations,

Monge and Berthollet noted the members who distinguished themselves either by their influence or their talents—an activity which discloses the intention of subsequently making use of those who gave evidence of ability.

The opening sitting was held in the presence of Bonaparte, in whose name an interpreter read a speech in Arabic. Bonaparte recalled in it that Egypt's natural wealth had made her fall into the hands of a succession of masters; no rule had been more noxious than that of the Turks; the existing situation of the people was wretched; the French, desiring the well-being of the Egyptians, proposed to wrest them from the tyranny and negligence of ignorant despots, to introduce order into the administration of the country, to improve the irrigation canals, to reopen communication between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and to restore to Egypt her ancient splendour. They had conquered the Mamelukes and had shown themselves just toward the natives, to whose trust and friendship they appealed. The general-in-chief expected from the notables the information which would permit him to accomplish all the good he had in his heart. There was nothing insincere in these declarations, which were an exact statement of Bonaparte's plans. Yet, to judge from the commentary of an Arab writer who was a member of the Divan, this speech must have been received by its hearers less with approval than with ironical incredulity. Most of them were the beneficiaries of the abuses which the Turks and the Mamelukes had perpetuated in Egypt, and they were not prepared to admit the blemishes of the régime that had been abolished or the laudable intentions of the new one.

The General Divan elected the sheik Abdullah Sherkawi as its president, and sat for a fortnight, from October 4th to 20th, 1798, under his presidency. All the questions submitted to it were referred in the first place to commissioners nominated by the president, and then discussed in plenary session. Its replies, given in writing, were generally inspired by a rather narrow conservatism. Thus, in the matter of inheritance, what was desirable was found to be simply and purely the maintenance of the existing order.

So also with the organization of the courts : there was 'no change or innovation needed in the manner of rendering justice in Egypt.' Such a statement as that shows the length to which conservatism and inability to conceive of reform were carried by the notables whom Bonaparte had assembled at Cairo. The same state of mind showed itself in their reply to the questions concerning the finances and private property. Each French commander of a province was to raise the same taxes, meet the same expenditure, and remit the same sums to the government as under the Mameluke rule, with the assistance of two native officials. If Bonaparte preferred to entrust these duties to taxation officials, collectors and tax payers were still to proceed 'in accordance with past usage.' As for landed property, it was declared to be 'physically impossible' to produce and register the titles in the time proposed. To provide the revenue anticipated from registration, it was suggested that a variable tax should be imposed on urban property in Cairo, Alexandria and Rosetta.<sup>1</sup> Finally, in regard to the organization of the provincial divans the assembly proposed that Alexandria, Rosetta, and Damietta should each have a divan of twelve to fifteen members, that the other provinces should have several, meeting in the principal towns, and that each of these councils should send three deputies to the General Divan at Cairo. The notables had only been consulted on the composition of these organs, and so were unable to put obstacles in the way of the principle of representative institutions, a complete system of which was to cover their whole country.

Twenty years later, dictating to Bertrand the story of his Egyptian campaign, Napoleon claimed that 'the members of the Grand Divan had equal hatred for the Mamelukes and the Osmanli.' If his account is to be accepted, 'the educated men felt the excellence of the principles governing the nations of Europe ; they were attracted by the perspective of the happiness which would result for them from a good government and a civil and criminal justice founded on sound ideas.' The Emperor seems here to have

<sup>1</sup> Dwellings, caravanserais, shops, workplaces, cafes, baths, etc.

taken his wish for reality. The desires expressed by the Divan on essential points contradict the sentiments the prisoner of St. Helena attributed in retrospect to the members of that assembly. The sentiments he ascribes to them are those with which his native policy aimed at inspiring them ; not those which it actually awakened in them.

It has sometimes been argued that, since the members of the General Divan had been appointed by the commandants of provinces and chosen from among natives who had given pledges to French rule, they were incapable not only of intractability, as might be expected, but of any sort of independence. Their replies prove the contrary, revealing candour in the objections raised to proposals and even to decisions of Bonaparte's. The replies also showed that the way in which these first representatives of the Egyptian people were consulted respected their freedom of expression of opinion.

Their independent stand was not taken in bad part. As each reply from the Divan became known, it was brought before a sort of administrative council presided over by Bonaparte and composed of the *ordonnateur en chef*, the administrator of finances, and the *intendant général*. No reply was received with scorn or anger, however suspicious of all innovations it might be. Bonaparte and his administrative council recognized, on the contrary, the necessity of paying a good deal of attention to the desires expressed by the notables. The collection of land tax was entrusted to Turkish agents, whom the commandants of provinces were requested to support. The registration of titles to house property was abandoned. The suggestion to replace it by a tax on buildings, varying with their nature and purpose, was adopted. Only land remained subject to registration and to the appropriate duty payment. The mosques were exempted from all taxation.<sup>1</sup> The composition of the divans was laid down on lines that departed from those proposed by the general assembly only in being simpler. A decree issued by Bonaparte on October 20th prescribed

<sup>1</sup> But, in spite of the opposition of the General Divan, the properties of the mosques and pious foundations were not exempted.

that there should be a General Divan of 25 members<sup>1</sup> in Cairo, nine from Cairo and sixteen from the sixteen provinces of Egypt. This Grand Council was to assemble when convoked by the *général en chef*. He would delegate nine of its members to form a smaller council in permanent session in the capital. In each province there was to be a provincial divan of nine members.<sup>2</sup> The General Divan at Cairo was to be superior to all the provincial divans, which were in turn to be the superiors of the native officials of their province. This organization definitely established the system which had just been tried in the meeting of the General Divan. It consecrated and made general the association of the natives in the conduct of their country's affairs, under the control of the central power, and applied this method both to the general administration of the country and to that of each province.

Bonaparte was incontestably entitled to high praise for entering on the experiment of this consultation and for making such constructive use of it. But the effect was not what he might have hoped for on behalf of French rule. Not that it failed entirely to create any favourable impression : for the less prejudiced of the members of the General Divan were able to see the genuineness of the appeal made for their collaboration, and of Bonaparte's desire to improve the lot of the population. But this was not the only or even the principal result. The questions referred to the Divan affected all sorts of material interests already placed under its care. The alarm they caused was increased by the announcement of the new fiscal measure, which seemed to the mass to be the aim and the consequence of the deliberations of the Divan, and still more by the formalities<sup>3</sup> which prepared the way for collection. 'The people,' writes an Arab chronicler, 'were irritated by this measure

<sup>1</sup> Nominated by the general-in-chief and selected, one-third each, from the *sheiks el beled*, the merchants, and the lawyers.

<sup>2</sup> Elected by meetings of electors who were to be appointed by the commandant of the province.

<sup>3</sup> Notices posted in the streets of Cairo, and investigations by engineers and architects who went through the various quarters taking note of landed properties and their owners, and even, at times, making domiciliary visits.

and cried out against it as tyrannical; crowds were seen gathering on all sides.' The persuasive influence of native collaborators in the administration was of the sort that takes time to be effective, while the misgivings aroused by the establishment of the tax were of the sort that spring up at once.

Before French rule had lasted three months, various factors were at work to produce a native rising. To begin with, there was English propaganda. On leaving Aboukir after his naval victory, Nelson had left a cruising squadron to blockade the coast of Egypt. The senior officer of this squadron, Captain Sidney Smith, had no difficulty in establishing relations with the coastal population, recruiting agents from among it, and getting news spread by them which calculated to excite the Egyptians against the invader—among other things, the news of imminent armed intervention by the Turks. The Egyptians were thus deterred from compromising with French rule, which seemed bound to disappear before long, and the simplest among them were encouraged to rise against it.

There was also the propaganda of the Mamelukes. They had been defeated at the Pyramids, but not destroyed. Bonaparte's first idea on the morrow of his victory over them had been to induce them to accept defeat. He made offers of accommodation to Ibrahim, who had taken refuge in Syria, and to Murad, who had been driven into Upper Egypt.<sup>1</sup> But both moves failed. The Mamelukes thus remained enemies of the French, beaten, decimated, routed or harried, but still in touch with elements within the country and able to communicate with them. Their resistance to the French invasion had also produced a solidarity with the legitimate master of Egypt, the Sultan, and made them auxiliaries of Turkey. Their counter-attacks remained dangerous, and their political action, aligned with English propaganda, served the Turkish cause.

The propaganda from both English and Mameluke sources

<sup>1</sup> He sent the Venetian Rosetti to Murad with a proposed convention.

received immense assistance and drew enormous profit from an event which had just happened, unknown to Bonaparte—the declaration of war on France by the Porte. As already mentioned, the initial project of the Egyptian expedition included negotiation with the Ottoman Porte, to obtain its assent. The intention had been to assure to Bonaparte the advantages which modern colonizers seek in the guise of a protectorate—that of proceeding under cover of the name and authority of the legitimate sovereign. But Talleyrand, who was to be entrusted with this negotiation, had no enthusiasm for it, and after Bonaparte's departure he slipped out of it. The Directory then chose Descorches, former French Minister at Constantinople, in Talleyrand's place, and he received instructions accordingly. But at the moment when Descorches was about to leave, the news of the Porte's declaration of war reached Paris, and Descorches was stopped: there was no longer any point in his proceeding.

After hesitations which had been cut short by the defeat of the French fleet at Aboukir, the Porte had ultimately decided to break with France. On September 2nd, 1798, the French *chargé d'affaires*, Ruffin, was arrested and imprisoned in the castle of the Seven Towers. On the 9th the declaration of war was issued.

Meanwhile Bonaparte, counting on the result of the negotiations which he supposed to be under way at Constantinople, had presented himself to the Egyptians as the friend and ally of the Sultan. He had taken every opportunity of vouching for the Franco-Turkish entente on which he was counting; and he had taken every opportunity of verifying its existence. When he began to suspect that the Directory had not kept faith with him, he sent envoys to the English ships on blockade duty in order, on various pretexts, to gain information as to Turkey's attitude. When he first had news of the hostility of the Porte, he refused to credit it, so seriously would it interfere with his hopes and increase his difficulties. At the end of October he was still without official knowledge of the declaration of war, and he continued to throw doubt on it. For it

meant to him the collapse of a whole scheme of foreign policy which he had not even begun to carry out. It deprived him of an essential resource in his native policy, brought the Turks and the Mamelukes into line against him, and brought into operation among the Mussulman Egyptians the spiritual authority of the Commander of the Faithful.

The natives learned of the event at Constantinople before Bonaparte did. It had been equally in the interest of the English and of the Mamelukes to spread the news in Egypt through their agents and emissaries. English propaganda and that of the beys accordingly made themselves instruments of a Turkish and Islamic propaganda. Thus it was learnt at Cairo that the Porte had extended the power of the Pasha of Acre, Ahmed Djezzar, to the whole of Syria ; and later that it had appointed him *seraskier* (Commander in Chief) of Egypt. Djezzar himself sent to the sheik Sadat the sultan's firman summoning the Faithful to a holy war. This firman quoted an apocryphal letter from the Directory to Bonaparte recommending him to use force and dissimulation in turn to destroy Islam and seize the territory of Egypt. Other rumours were put into circulation : the Captain Pasha's<sup>1</sup> squadron had moored off Jaffa ; it had landed there a Turkish army the strength of which, with the reinforcement of Djezzar's troops, was beyond counting. The sheiks of Cairo received letters from Ibrahim Bey : 'The Great Sovereign our master sends you an army ; if it please God it will reach you without delay.' These documents were publicly read and commented on in the mosques. Incitements to revolt were launched from the minarets with the daily call to prayer. Ibrahim from Gaza and Murad from Upper Egypt inundated the Egyptian provinces with threats against those of the *sheiks el beled* who had come to terms with the French.

Bonaparte was not entirely unaware of these intrigues, since he had certain of the letters addressed to the sheiks by Ibrahim Bey passed on to him, and had two of the couriers who had brought them executed. But at the time he did

<sup>1</sup> Title given to the Turkish High Admiral.



not fully realize the extent of the propaganda or the danger it represented. Otherwise he would have taken precautions : he took none. On the contrary, he imagined the public tranquillity and the security of the occupying forces to be greater than they were. The soldiers were full of the cheerful confidence of the Frenchman when the fighting is over, and this added to the confidence of the leaders. But the propaganda from abroad had produced a latent state of agitation among the Egyptians, especially in Cairo. The announcement of the Turkish offensive removed the general fear of the strength of the French hold of the country, and the notables, doubting whether it would last, regretted having compromised with the French. Any spark might start an explosion in Cairo—at the very moment when reforms in preparation or in process of execution were multiplying the opportunities for incidents.

The Turkish war and the sultan's summons to a holy war thus subjected to a critical test the precarious pacification of Egypt which Bonaparte's native policy aimed at completing, and with which it was impossible for his administration to avoid interfering from time to time.

'The inhabitants of Cairo have been won over by our friendliness, and show us the greatest cordiality. Thanks to the mildness of our rule, there is entire security in all classes of society.' These lines were written on 20 Fructidor of the year VI by André Peyrusse, secretary to Poussielgue. A month later, the facts cruelly belied this optimism.

On the morning of 30 Vendémiaire (October 21st, 1798), crowds began to collect. Bands of armed natives, led by agitators, made for the Cadi's house and the mosque of El Azhar. By 8 a.m. the disorder was sufficient for the French troops to be called to arms. Two hours later, hostilities were opened between the French and the insurgents, who fell on isolated soldiers or civilians, attacked the less well guarded establishments, put up barricades in the streets, barred access to the mosque of El Azhar, the centre of the insurrection, placed sentries at the principal gates, Bab en Nasr and Bab Foutouh, and attempted to cut

communications between the points strongly occupied by the French. General Dupuy, commanding in Cairo, was killed. On the following day Sulkowski, A.D.C. to Bonaparte and member of the Institute of Egypt, was killed. Sedition spread throughout the city, except in the outer suburbs. It lasted two days, October 21st and 22nd, and exacted a toll of two hundred victims among the French and seven to eight hundred among the rebels. It was crushed on the second day, but only after hot engagements between the insurgents and the French troops and a bombardment of El Azhar lasting from noon until the evening. Only then did the madmen entrenched in this mosque decide to negotiate a surrender, after which the barricades obstructing access to the mosque were demolished and the last stronghold of the insurrection was occupied by the French troops. On the following day military patrols re-established order, dispersing crowds, seizing arms, and making arrests.

‘We have just conquered Cairo,’ said Vivant-Denon, ‘which at first did no more than yield to the conqueror of the Mamelukes.’ The surrender of Cairo had, indeed, been only an act of fear. The French had never been anything but infidels in the eyes of the inhabitants; and when these infidels, after invading a land of Islam, multiplied fiscal exactions the Mussulmans had soon tired of putting their hands into their pockets for the benefit of enemies of their faith. Then the respite represented by the submission of Cairo after the battle of the Pyramids came to an end.

The spark which had started the explosion was the feeling aroused by the announcement of the property tax. ‘A light tax placed on the shops caused this insurrection,’ said André Peyrusse. But this was only the occasion for a revolt which had been long in preparation and had only been awaiting a suitable moment for breaking out. The insurrection took at once a totally different character from that of a mere protest against a fiscal measure. It rapidly showed itself to be a popular rising mainly inspired by religious fanaticism. Agitators pulled this particular string to rouse the easily inflamed populace and the fanatics,

priests, dervishes, and students, who were all the readier to defend the cause of the Prophet because they imagined that its avengers were on the march and about to show themselves. It was no mere chance that the mosque of El Azhar was the headquarters and stronghold of the insurrection. There had crystallized around religious fanaticism every element of prejudice which the French rulers had succeeded in arousing in the inhabitants of the capital by coming among them. And fanaticism had been reinforced by the instinct of rapine and the hope of loot, which were easily awakened in the Egyptian populace. The revolt in Cairo was thus the reaction of the most turbulent and most fanatical elements of the native population to the occupation of the city by the French—a reaction which had taken a good deal of time to develop, as often happens in Mussulman countries invaded by Europeans.

The French camp was completely taken by surprise. The military authorities, 'deceived as to the spirit of the population,' had made no preparation against the eventuality of a revolt. On the very day on which it broke out, soldiers and officers and savants had left their quarters as usual to attend to their duties and occupations. Bonaparte himself had left early in the morning with Caffarelli and his staff to visit the island of Rodah. He was warned of the rising by the alarm signal and by orderlies, but only succeeded in re-entering the city by the Boulak gate after having been driven back from two others. Thus no one from top to bottom of the hierarchy had had any anticipation of the explosion. The generals themselves, who were the first to be at grips with the rising, took some time to establish its true proportions. The French had had no ill-will toward the Mussulmans, and had imagined that the Mussulmans had none toward them. They had trusted to their liberal attitude to guarantee the security which they imagined themselves to be enjoying. They had not had the slightest suspicion of any insurrectional movement of these proportions.

The event disillusioned Bonaparte as to the effects of his Mussulman, his native policy. II showed him how precarious and how limited those effects still were. The very

class in which he had supposed them to be best assured, the class from which he had chosen collaborators in the exercise of his power, had failed to come up to his expectation.

Napoleon claimed later to have attached the sheiks to himself by associating them in his administration. 'They were themselves astonished,' he said, 'to find that the victory of the infidels, which they had all dreaded, assured their own triumph. They were sincerely attached to Sultan Kebir.' It pleased the Emperor at St. Helena, in recalling his memories of Egypt, to indulge in this rose-coloured retrospect. Sometimes he showed the sheiks admiringly taking note of his justice and his concern for the safety of the peaceful fellaheen, and the president of the Divan declaring to him: 'What you say is just; you speak like the Prophet.' Sometimes he represented the most religious of the Egyptians as won over by his Mussulman policy, the ulema noting with pleasure that the French soldiers did not attend the Christian churches, the conviction gaining ground that Sultan Kebir was protected by the Prophet, the sheiks telling everywhere of the way they were being petted and held in regard, their 'partiality' for their new master becoming evident. These statements require a great deal of discounting; they bear the impress of complacent exaggeration. No doubt the native notables, employed and remunerated as members of the divans, gradually lost something of their prejudices against the occupying power, with which they had compromised out of prudence and self-interest. But it was not, to begin with, without mental reservations that they compromised; and not all of the sheiks could be offered the honours and profits of collaboration. Those who were excluded from them were so much the more bitter against the invader.

In any case, during the insurrection at Cairo the sheiks did not all adopt the same attitude. Some took an active part in the revolt, or were surreptitiously in close touch with the insurgents; these were the ones upon whose services Bonaparte had not called. Even among the members of the Divan there were one or two who did not refuse to be compromised in the sinister intrigue. Among them was a

sheik who in origin and influence was one of the most considerable of them, the sheik Sadat. 'His bad conduct' was notorious, according to Bonaparte, who even described him as the 'leader of the revolt.' Other witnesses have exculpated Sadat, stating that he was actually a victim of ill-treatment at the hands of the insurgents. But Bonaparte did not readily bring charges against the memory of the 'great sheiks,' and must have had good reasons for imputing disloyalty to Sadat. He declared that he had seen the evidence of it in the sheik's demeanour on the day after the insurrection—humble, and trembling with fright. He held, accordingly, that Sadat had been disloyal on this occasion. The other sheiks at Cairo either did nothing or were entirely ineffective. Not one of them denounced the conspiracy. Not one of them used his influence either to forestall or to stop the rising; some of them had had a finger in it. Those who tried to intervene during the fighting were unable to make themselves heard; their popular influence had been compromised by the functions they had accepted from the conqueror. The Cadi tried to calm the demonstrators; he was roughly handled and his house was sacked. The 'great sheiks' who tried to parley with the defenders of El Azhar were received with rifle fire. It is not certain, however, that they did not claim merit for efforts which they did not really make. For the only one of them who left a record of what happened is far from insisting on their loyalty: according to him, they turned a deaf ear to Bonaparte's appeal and stood aside, until the moment came for appealing to his clemency on behalf of the people.

Actually Bonaparte showed them no indulgence at the time, and treated them with severity in the bitterness of his disappointment. When they came to implore him to put an end to the bloodshed, he told them that he regarded them as the sole culprits. He asked them what were the motives of the revolt, and, when they gave explanations that revealed too little of their own responsibility, told them that he knew the real motives. Had they deserved his rough reprimand? He himself subsequently went far to exculpate them, with the single exception of Sadat:



SHEIK EL MOHDI

SHEIK EL BEKRI

SHEIK EL SADAT

THREE GREAT SHEIKS OF CAIRO

*By Rigo. Versailles Museum*



'It was impossible to blame them; they had remained loyal, but had been unable to withstand the torrent of popular opinion.' Bonaparte seems, therefore, to have been over-severe with them. But, whether his reproaches were exaggerated or not, they prove that his method of association had brought him in these leaders either doubtful or ineffective helpers. Yet these were the men in whom and through whom he imagined that he had touched the spirit of Arab nationalism! 'The glory and well-being of the Arab mother country were dear to all,' he wrote of them; 'this was a trait on which unlimited hopes could be set for the future.' How far that future was from dawning in Egypt was shown by these events. It had been possible for a rising to be engineered in Cairo by the intrigues of the Turks, the Mamelukes, and the English, without meeting any obstacles either from an Arab particularism or an Egyptian feeling, since neither of these had any existence.

At all events, the rising had not been general. Nothing approaching a majority even of the population of the capital had taken part in it. Its forces had come partly from the lowest class of the people and partly from the membership of the mosques, the religious fraternities, and the university—two categories of inhabitants of Cairo of which each was sufficiently numerous to bring a very considerable contingent to the rising. Apart from this 'crowd of proletarians hungering for loot and disorder,' and these imams, mullahs, and petty sheiks, both elements incited to action by certain personages in the highest quarters, there were other elements of the Mussulman population that refused to be dragged into the movement. These were the merchants, shopkeepers, stall-holders and artisans, whose daily bread depended on public order, on the smaller landowners, and also on the rich—individuals living by manual labour, by trading, retail or wholesale, or on the income from an estate, small or large, orderly and peaceable people, or simply honest folk. All these, and they made up a large number in a populous industrial city like Cairo, prudently held aloof from the disorders, or in some cases even rendered unostentatious services to the French. Some



showed real generosity. Thus it was far from being all the subjects of Bonaparte's administration in Cairo who turned against him.

The submission of the natives of Egypt had been put to the test by the Turkish entry into war. Conversely, the insurrection of the inhabitants of Cairo tested Bonaparte's native policy. In repressing the insurrection, Bonaparte did not lose sight of what must follow repression—a morrow on which the safety of his troops could not depend exclusively on their strength, any more than it had done in the past. The repression of an insurrectional movement of such violence does not end with the last shot fired. Insurgents had been made prisoner with arms in their hands : Bonaparte ordered that all of them should 'have their heads cut off.' But he was far from wishing their execution to receive a publicity that would strike terror into the people ; he intended that it should take place with as little publicity as possible, almost in secret. His order was that the execution should take place on the night of October 23rd–24th, on the banks of the Nile, between Boulak and Old Cairo, and that 'the headless corpses are to be thrown into the river.' This act of justice aimed at making an end of the culprits caught red-handed, not at terrorizing the population, which was not permitted to witness it.

Punishment had been justly suffered by the rebels caught red-handed : the leaders who had plunged them into the rebellion could not all go scot free. The rising had opened the eyes of the French to the intrigues that had fomented it—all the more since letters and firmans continued to arrive from Syria after the insurrection had been crushed, and the recipients no longer dared to take the responsibility of concealing them from Bonaparte. An investigation fastened particularly heavy responsibility on certain sheiks, and on November 3rd Bonaparte pronounced sentence of death on them. It was pronounced on fifteen in all, six of whom were held prisoner and the other nine sentenced *in contumaciam*. The execution of the leaders was performed with the same absence of publicity as in the case of the

humbler offenders. Bonaparte kept it, indeed, as long as possible from the knowledge even of their relatives. They had been imprisoned in the house of the sheik Bekri. One night they were taken away on some pretext, conveyed to the citadel, and there executed on the following morning.<sup>1</sup> Bonaparte had already refused the sheik Sadat's application for their release, and they had been dead several days when he refused a similar application from the kiaya to the pasha, without mentioning that his appeal came too late. Bonaparte thus saw to it that the necessary punishments should not upset the measures he was taking to restore calm.

Under the Consulate and the Empire, the pencil and paintbrush and graving tool were kept busy popularizing the moving scene of 'Bonaparte's pardon of the insurgents at Cairo.' This scene, to tell the truth, is not easy to discover in the story of the few days covered by the insurrection and its immediate results. But it is symbolic of a moderation which is not imaginary. The general-in-chief prudently abstained from too indiscreet an inquiry into the acts of the most important personages among the Mussulmans. He decided to assume them to have been innocent of any positive misdemeanour. 'I know many of you are weak, but I prefer to think that none of you is criminal.' These words of his to the 'sixty sheiks and imams of the great mosque' synthesize his wise resolve not to go too deeply into the question of their responsibilities. He restored to them at once the sacred books, and copies of the Koran, which had been removed from El Azhar after the capture of the mosque. The sheik Sadat, of whose duplicity Bonaparte had no doubt whatever, was deliberately exonerated. His gentle treatment was due to these political considerations: 'If we allowed it to appear that

<sup>1</sup> The following notice appears in the *Courrier de l'Egypte* of 20 Brumaire, year VII, dated 14 Brumaire: 'Today at 9 a.m. the sheiks Ismail el Bezani, Yussuf el Mussilibi, Abdul Tehab el Shebrani, Soliman el Giusaki, El Seyd Abd el Kesim, and Ahmed el Sherkawi were beheaded in the citadel square. They were convicted of being authors of the revolt which took place at Cairo on 30 Vendémiaire and 1 Brumaire. Most of these sheiks took part in the revolt out of hatred for their colleagues who had been promoted to public employment.'

we had knowledge of his bad conduct, we should have to have his head cut off ; but in the existing state of public feeling his death would bring more trouble than advantage ; his name is venerated all over the East ; we should be making a martyr of him.' Bonaparte has himself sketched in a few lines a lively picture of his first interview with the sheik after the crushing of the revolt. The scene was the ' levée ' of the general-in-chief, which Sadat had attended at Bonaparte's express invitation : the sheik had not ventured to appear before him on the previous day. Sadat, visibly terrified, faltering and incoherent, offered hypocritical congratulations to Bonaparte, and then, ' in ■ convulsive movement and as if anxious to do something more to assure his pardon,' seized the hand of ' Sultan Kebir ' and put it to his lips. Kléber, who had arrived from Alexandria and came upon this scene, was astonished at the condescension of the *général en chef* toward this suspect, this guilty person, and learned from Bonaparte himself the very practical reason for it. It is a pretty example of interested clemency.

The French troops had occupied the mosque of El Azhar, after forcing an entrance ; their bivouac in the mosque was a subject of scandal to the Mussulmans, though the Mussulmans had themselves set the example of using the mosque for belligerent purposes. The sheiks appealed to Bonaparte to withdraw his soldiers, and he consented on October 24th, leaving only a detachment of seventy men in the neighbourhood of the mosque.

A general amnesty was proclaimed several times, in Arabic ; the proclamation was posted in the streets. At the request of the sheiks, the evacuation of the quarter of El Azhar soon followed that of the mosque, ' in order to let the people go about their business.' A manifesto was demanded from the ulema of Cairo to inform the inhabitants of the provinces of the disturbances of October 21st and 22nd, not without minimizing their importance. This document stigmatized the ' wretched madmen ' who had created discord between the people and the French army, advised the Egyptians not to follow this baleful example, exhorted

them to remain calm and confident, quoted the verse of the Koran : ' The Almighty gives power to whom He will,' and praised the magnanimity of Bonaparte. ' He is a man whose spirit is perfect and whose heart inclines toward the Mussulmans . . . ; without him, his army would destroy the city and kill all its inhabitants.' In a second manifesto, similarly demanded from them, the ulema declared the Sultan's firmans circulated in Egypt to be apocryphal, maintained the fiction of the Franco-Ottoman alliance, affirmed that ' the French love the Mussulmans,' accused Russians and English of evil designs against Turkey, exhorted the Egyptians to submission and prudence, and finally assured them that Bonaparte would ' not permit any Mussulman to be disturbed in his faith ' and would make an end of every sort of tyranny. These two proclamations were not only sent into the provinces but read and posted in Cairo. Bonaparte's recourse to the ulema on the morrow of the insurrection continued the application of his native, Mussulman policy, simultaneously with the rigours with which it was impossible for him to dispense.

These rigours appealed, naturally, very differently to the Egyptians and to the French. In the view of those of the Egyptians who had knowledge of the executions, Bonaparte's vengeance was stayed only when ' the number of Mussulmans who died had sufficed to appease the manes of the French who had been victims of the revolt.' Arrests, searches, and sentences pronounced by the Christians against the Mahometans were so many evidences of a fact which was in itself painful : ' The Infidels are triumphing over the Mussulmans.' The French, in general, regarded the repression as too indulgent. This was the opinion of civilian and military witnesses who cannot be charged with poltroonery or bloodthirstiness. Some of the generals demanded reprisals and the making of examples ; some of the savants and artists deplored the omission to do so ; and it was not without regret that officers and soldiers refrained. There were numbers who considered that, after the shock French rule had received, its future security required the guarantee of something more than the mere

defeat of the insurgents and the strictly indispensable punishments. To efface the moral effect of the danger which had shaken the régime, men who were in no way athirst for blood would gladly have seen the general-in-chief resort to terrorism. Nowhere is this feeling to be found more strongly expressed than in the following lines written by a man who carefully weighed his words, Vivant-Denon : 'Perhaps all those whose eyes had seen the companies of French retreat should have been put to death.' The immediate restoration of worship in the mosques, from which the call to revolt had come and in which the resistance had been prolonged, was found fault with as likely to give the natives the impression of weakness. In short, Bonaparte was criticized pretty strongly for his 'moderation,' his 'clemency.' The least that can be inferred is that the repression, if it appeared so inadequate, did not err on the side of excess. The difference that showed itself on this point between Bonaparte and his companions at arms was that between two political conceptions, that which aimed merely at making French rule feared, and that which aimed still at securing its acceptance.

The former of these is to be accounted for by a feeling of distrust aroused and brought to a high pitch by the insurrection in Cairo, and a sense of having been insufficiently distrustful of the Mussulman natives in the past. 'Hatred and rancour' began now to be read into the native's glance, his 'dark and fierce looks,' and he was suspected of nursing vengeance. There was a feeling of being enveloped in an atmosphere of hostility, of moving in the midst of an enemy multitude. Was there not, then, since 'the French owe everything to force, nothing to sympathy,'—a thing that was still true,—was there not less risk in abusing force than in using too little of it ?

Without subscribing to these pessimistic conclusions, Bonaparte did not reject the true lesson of the aggression from which he had suffered. He requested the regimental commanders to remind the troops of the conditions of their safety, and of the principles of prudence and of discipline—not to leave barracks alone and unarmed ; 'in case of

disturbances in the city,' to rejoin their unit ; when all was quiet, not to be over-confident ; and always to abstain from breaking into native houses and from pillaging. It was decided to provide for the safety of the garrison by erecting fortifications, to take steps to remedy the dangerous isolation of the principal French establishments in Cairo, and to safeguard the communications between them. The order was given to recruit from among the 'Greeks' in the country three companies of a hundred men each, one for Cairo, one for Rosetta, and one for Damietta, all of them for escort service with the river convoys : it was an appeal to the armed assistance of the Christians of the East against the Mussulmans. None of these measures escaped the notice of the natives ; the circumstances in which they were adopted were sufficient explanation of their purpose. Finally, distrust and dissatisfaction found expression in the abolition of the General Divan for Egypt and the Cairo Divan, an action which Bonaparte intended as a political punishment. 'I was angry with you because of your revolt, and have deprived you of your Divan for two months,' he said to the inhabitants of the capital on re-establishing the Divans. For their suppression lasted only two months. Was his original intention to close the Divans temporarily or permanently ? Probably he did not know himself. The duration of the punishment was to depend on the conduct of those suffering it, and on the result of the experience of direct administration.

Contrary to what certain historians have stated, the city was not 'subjected to an extraordinary levy, imposed partly as indemnity and partly as punishment.' There is no evidence anywhere of an order to that effect, and the sums which Bonaparte tried to collect in the following January were arrears of levies and forced loans imposed after his entry into Cairo but before the insurrection.

Such was Bonaparte's reaction in Cairo to the rising of part of the Mussulman population. It was energetic rather than sanguinary, and avoided as far as possible any clash with the policy he had laid down once for all.

It was impossible that the news of the rising in Cairo should fail to reach the provinces or to have repercussions there. Bonaparte took steps to prevent it from being exploited to the detriment of order and submission. He was careful, in sending the news to his representatives, to attenuate the gravity of the danger run by the garrison and the losses suffered by his troops, and to exaggerate the number of victims among the insurgents. At the same time, he urged his generals to rigorous action, quoting his own as example : ' Every night we are having thirty heads cut off, many of them heads of leaders.' In reality he had once more over-stated his own rigour : when he wrote those lines no heads were falling nightly. But he exaggerated deliberately, not wishing the weakness of any provincial commander to permit insubordination to spread. Berthier followed suit in his correspondence : ' The Turkish rabble,' he wrote to the governor of Damietta, ' are as cowardly as they are vicious ; they can only be dealt with by harshness.' The danger to be parried by rigour was that the insurgents of Cairo should be copied elsewhere.

The rising in Cairo did in fact coincide with hostile movements in neighbouring villages and among nomad tribes ; and this showed the identity of the cause of all the native risings. There had manifestly been collusion between Turks, Mamelukes, turbulent elements in Cairo, fellaheen in its neighbourhood, and Bedouins of the western tribes. Peasants had been summoned by messages from the capital, and had flocked in during the second day's fighting. The appearance of Arabs at the gates of the city while fighting was in progress proved that the instigators of the insurrection had also given the signal to the nomads. And the activity of the Turks and the Mamelukes in the provinces of Lower Egypt, now among a settled population and now among a nomad tribe, was reported by several generals. These proofs of co-ordination of hostilities make it impossible to see in them merely local incidents. It was thus necessary to demonstrate the strength of the occupying force to those who were sceptical of it.

This was done without delay by sending detachments



*Il Mummy Napoleone*



**BONAPARTE AS A MUMMY** (*above*)

*Italian Caricature*

**BONAPARTE PARDONING THE CAIRO REBELS** (*below*)

*Engraving by Raffet*

*Illustrations from Author's collection*





through the environs of Cairo to seize various hostages and compromised leaders, by operations against the Arabs of Sharkieh and Menoufieh, by the consolidation of the occupation at Damietta and its extension to the region of Lake Menzaleh, and by the reinforcement of the advanced posts on the Syrian frontier. The effect of these measures on the natives usefully strengthened that of the failure of the rising in Cairo. In the localities in which the settled population had shown signs of revolt, a prudent submission soon began to show itself again; and even the Bedouins, whose mobility enabled them to escape strict discipline, became more circumspect. Before the end of November, it was possible to regard the crisis in the French occupation in Egypt as surmounted. The security of the troops and of the rule established under their protection was consolidated for the time by the very fact of the failure and repression of the insurrection.

The disturbances had not by any means been general. They had been confined, apart from the capital, to its environs and to the regions of Lower Egypt most accessible to influence from Syria. With the exception of Tantah, a wasp's nest into which Bonaparte again refrained from putting his hand, there was no serious disturbance in any important provincial centre. Thus, on the whole, if the difficulties of this colonial enterprise and the circumstances surrounding it are borne in mind, the test to which it was subjected by the events of October 1798 was not so fatal to the native policy followed by Bonaparte. All that failed to stand the test was the premature hope for rapid results, not the policy itself, the fruits of which were shown by the very fact that the native ferment did not spread everywhere.

At the same time, this policy was still faced by the external factor which had begun to show itself in the incitements to revolt—the war with the Porte. And this complication was one of the most formidable with which Bonaparte could meet, until victory could establish his military superiority over the Ottoman armies.

About this time the rumour spread in Europe that

Bonaparte had been assassinated. It was a distortion of the news of the insurrection at Cairo and of the murder of General Dupuy, and gained a measure of credence in England and certain Italian states. An Italian caricature represents *Buonaparte mummia*, 'Bonaparte the mummy,' his head wearing the plumed *bicorne* (two-pointed cocked hat) of the generals of the Revolution, and his body wrapped in mummy cloths. He lies in a sarcophagus, the lid of which is held up by French officers and by natives in the dress of the days of the Pharaohs. Were they entombing him? Or were they discovering him in this guise after centuries in the grave? It is not known which of the two alternatives was intended by the caricaturist. But one thing is clear: he had ranged Bonaparte among the dead, and mummified him, taking his own wish for reality. If the young general had learnt of this macabre fantasy, he would have been able to reply with old Corneille:

*Les gens que vous tuez se portent assez bien*

—'The people you are killing are doing quite well.' His situation was, indeed, not enviable. But he had it sufficiently in control to be already feeling a temptation which was readily felt by the bearer of the sceptre of Egypt if he had the strength—the temptation to fall upon Syria.

## X

### TROUBLES AND LABOURS OF THE INSTITUTE OF EGYPT

' THE INSURRECTIONARY movements which broke out at Cairo on 30 Vendémiaire made it impossible for the Institute to assemble on 1 Brumaire.' So wrote the *Décade Egyptienne* in its record of the meetings of the Institute of Egypt. The members of that learned body had indeed had a valid excuse for not meeting. Two days of street fighting, seven to eight hundred victims among the insurgents, and about two hundred and fifty among the French—this is what the modest phrase in the *Décade* covers.

From the general-in-chief to his humblest soldier, everyone had been taken by surprise by the rising; and if the military were caught napping how should the civilians have shown more foresight? Thus the phalanx of savants and artists attached to the expedition were in some danger of disappearing amid the storm which had overtaken them. One of the first French buildings to be attacked was the house of General Caffarelli du Falga, head of the Science and Arts Commission. As it happened, he had left before the arrival of the rioters. On the other hand, Testevuide, head of the ordnance survey, Duperret, one of his staff, and three civil engineers, Duval, Thévenot, and Caristie, had just gone to the house for some scientific apparatus. For some hours they resisted the attack, with the aid of sappers on guard; then, seeing that the house was about to be invaded from the terraces, they decided to attempt a sortie in order to break through the assailants. Within a few steps Testevuide, Duperret, Thévenot, and Duval were overwhelmed and killed. Only Caristie made good his escape.

All the instruments and all the work of the engineers deposited at Caffarelli's house were looted or destroyed. Few even of the educated natives were then able to realize the vandalism of this pillage, but one of the Arab annalists mentions it with a touch of disapproval—of which he makes no sign on any occasion in regard to violence against the persons of the French.

Meanwhile the crowd murdered two young surgeons, Mangin and Roussel, outside the principal French military hospital. Equally blind in this case, the fury of the crowd made victims in the medical corps to which Desgenettes, the chief medical officer of the army, had given the noblest and most humane of instructions.

The progress of the insurrection soon imperilled Quassim Bey's palace, the headquarters of the Commission and the Institute. The building was some two kilometres from the Ezbekieh, where Bonaparte's headquarters were situated. The savants and artists living in this quasi-phalanstery were unarmed and without any prospect of immediate aid from the troops, which were engaged elsewhere, when they heard the roar of the crowds in Cairo and the muezzins' calls from the minarets urging the Faithful to revolt. Two engineers, Favier and Laroche, went on horseback to headquarters and back. Bonaparte sent an aide de camp from time to time to learn what was happening at Quassim Bey's. On the evening of October 21st, a company of grenadiers brought forty rifles and two hundred cartridges ; but many of the civilians were novices in the handling of firearms, and all passed the night on the alert.

At dawn on the next day, when their little garrison of grenadiers was taken away and sent against the mosque of El Azhar, there was animated discussion of various naïve projects of defence and entrenchment and various plans of operation. A little later, bands of fanatics driven from other parts of the city began to retreat in the direction of the Institute. There was talk then of evacuating the buildings and making for headquarters. But Monge and Berthollet objected that this would render certain the sacking of the library, the laboratory, and the collections ;

and this objection made an end of a plan that might have involved still other risks. Steps were taken to repel the expected assault if it should come—advance posts in the street, the doors barricaded, and sentinels placed at the windows. With his usual bravery, Monge placed himself at the most exposed spot, inviting any one to join him who would come to have a chat ‘to while away the tedium of the situation.’ But the majority preferred to set their wits to devising methods of resistance, or their arms to preparing them. ‘We appointed commanders,’ writes the painter Vivant-Denon; ‘everybody had a plan of his own, but nobody was ready to obey.’ Discipline was not perfect in the academic battalion.

Vivant-Denon, together with the mineralogist Dolomieu, the engineer Cordier, the botanist Delile, and Saint-Simon, Knight of Malta, occupied a house at a little distance from the main one. He and his comrades entrenched themselves in it ‘in such a way as to be able,’ he says, ‘to hold out for at least four hours’; they demolished a terrace in order to use the material for knocking down their assailants; their staircase became ‘an instrument of war for burying all our enemies at a stroke.’ But the numbers and the shouting of these enemies grew: happily, they held back out of respect for the preparations made for their reception. ‘We had some trying moments,’ confesses the naturalist Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. Finally there appeared from opposite quarters two patrols of French soldiers, who began to disperse the shouters. Their task was completed by Lannes, who had just occupied some high ground in the neighbourhood; he sent some professional warriors to raise the siege and remain as a guard over the ‘Pekinese.’ The civilians had had a narrow escape.

Their occupations, whether academic or of practical utility, were all directed toward the exploration, development, and restoration of Egypt. But their work was still entirely unknown to or misunderstood by the native masses, and did not protect them from violence.

The tempest destroyed many illusions. The alarms of the two days’ siege proved that Bonaparte’s religious

toleration had not disarmed Mussulman fanaticism, and that contact with the arts of Europe had not transformed all the Egyptians into neophytes of civilization. 'The 1st of Brumaire,' wrote Vivant-Denon, 'has rather torn the veil of philanthropy spread over Egypt. I think it will quite clearly be necessary to show our strength.' Was not that, indeed, 'a principle of the Alkoran'? Catholicism was too 'soft-spoken,' and the Egyptians were determined to consider the French of the year VII as Christians. No more, then, of evangelical meekness : energy, and out-Mussulman the Mussulmans !

Lack of energy was a reproach not often addressed to Bonaparte. But the savants and artists levelled it against him now. His mildness in repression was regarded by them as excessive indulgence, even as weakness. The engineer Gratien Le Père declared that he knew that the army, finding moderation imposed on it towards 'a coarse, ignorant, superstitious, cruel people, is obeying but gnashing at the bit.' Vivant-Denon, when writing his *Voyage* several years later, gave clearly to understand that Bonaparte had been gentle to excess. Bonaparte accused of softness by his colleagues in the Institute of Egypt—it was reserved to the insurrection of Cairo to achieve that paradox.

Had the dangers they had run made the civilians timid and bloodthirsty? Not at all. But they had passed from excessive confidence to excessive mistrust, an oscillation which frequently accompanies the loss of illusions. They had imagined themselves to be surrounded by sympathy ; they now supposed themselves to be in the midst of hostility. Vivant-Denon tells of having felt that after the insurrection in Cairo the French were enclosed in 'a narrower circle' than before : they moved now entirely among enemies. This sensation of a moral investment clearly owes something to the memory of the actual one.

In this suspicious state of mind, savants and artists saw with satisfaction four crenelated walls rise on the hill that dominated their enclosure. The 'Fort of the Institute' carried out the essential part of a decision notified by Bonaparte to Caffarelli in the following terms : 'Make of

the Institute quarter a French quarter.' Thereafter the asylum of the sciences, literature, and the arts was no longer without defence: Minerva had put on her helmet. The artillery of the neighbouring bastion protected the premises and the members of the Institute and the Commission.

Hostility, moreover, had not been shown by the whole of the Mussulman population of Cairo. At the height of their legitimate bitterness against their aggressors, the Academicians rendered justice to those of the natives who merited it. 'The populace, some of the great, and all the devotees'—these were the insurrectionaries. 'The middle class,' on the other hand, 'the class in which reason and virtue reside in all countries,' behaved toward the French in a 'perfectly humane and generous' manner. Vivant-Denon, who is responsible for these statements, instances some humane and charitable acts in witness of what he calls the 'sensibility' of the peaceful Cairenes. This term was part of the philosophic vocabulary of the French Revolution; the 'man of sensibility' was one of the types of that epoch, which was so rich in scenes of insensibility. Here the specimens of this type were furnished by the Egyptian third estate.

Once the disturbance had come to an end, civil activity was resumed in every domain. But gaps had been made. One of those who could no longer answer the roll-call was Sulkowski, aide de camp to Bonaparte and member of the Institute of Egypt. His portrait had just been done in pencil by Dutertre, who subsequently engraved it. One of the poets of the company, it is not known who, composed a quatrain to be placed under the portrait:

Dans tous les arts il obtint des succès ;  
Il fut savant sans vouloir le paraître.  
Si dans l'art des combats il fit plus de progrès,  
C'est qu'il choisit un meilleur maître.

('He succeeded in all the arts, and was learned without ostentation. If he did best as a soldier it was because he chose a better master.')



Nobody could have been more gallant towards a general in lamenting his A.D.C. The anonymous poet of the Cairo Academy had created a new *genre*, that of the epitaph-madrigal. The quatrain, in any case, was but a short prelude to a formal panegyric of the comrade who had fallen on the field of honour. Fourier, permanent secretary, was to have pronounced this panegyric, but it seems to have remained no more than a project. At all events, the Institute of Egypt had had the intention of observing the tradition of the academic eulogy.

The periodical sessions were resumed on 6 Brumaire, year VII, and continued regularly until the departure of some of the members for the Syrian expedition. Bonaparte was an assiduous supporter. His enthusiasm for the Institute of Egypt was no mere passing fancy. That austere corporate body was called at the time in the army 'the general's favourite mistress'—a jest with a touch of jealousy in it. There were occasions on which he spoke in his colonial Academy, in which he desired to be simply 'citizen Bonaparte.' One occasion was when he proposed a comparative study of native and European methods of wheat culture; another when he described the results of researches into 'the municipal, judicial, religious and political system of Egypt.' This latter must have been a communication of rare interest; a colonial governor named Bonaparte analysing and commenting on the information collected by his departmental assistants on some essential parts of the administrative and social structure of the country; the future First Consul rehearsing in Egypt his coming rôle of head of the state.

He was a zealous Academician, and his academic zeal needed restraining rather than stimulating. Monge had to dissuade him from presenting a written paper to his fellow-members; he pointed out that Bonaparte would not have time to prepare a good one and that it was not desirable that he should compose a mediocre one. On 26 Frimaire, year VII, Bonaparte was elected president for the succeeding three months, in succession to Monge, with Berthollet for vice-president; but his election was a homage only to his rank.

An engraving by Protain inserted in the *Description de l'Egypte* shows Bonaparte arriving in the lecture hall with Caffarelli—who may be recognized by his wooden leg—and welcomed by the senior members of this scientific areopagus, who are coming forward to receive him. It is a scene which the guests in the palace of Quassim Bey often witnessed in the autumn and winter of the year VI–VII.

The respect shown him did not degenerate into servility. On one occasion Desgenettes, the chief medical officer, had supported Berthollet in a discussion with Bonaparte on some chemical subject. The general, who was in a bad humour, went so far as to shout: 'Chemistry is cookery for the physician, and medicine the science of murderers.' 'In that case,' Desgenettes replied, 'how would you define the science of conquerors?' Bonaparte had no retort ready for this, and accepted the rebuff.

There were still full programmes at the sittings. The papers continued to be of very diverse nature, a state of things inevitable in non-specialized academies. Fourier, the permanent secretary, read 'a paper on general mechanics,' reported on 'researches on the methods of elimination,' and explained 'a new theorem in algebra.' Monge described 'observations on capillary phenomena,' or communicated information on natural history and on ancient geography. Berthollet read a study on 'safflower dyeing of flax and cotton.' Dolomieu dealt with agriculture in Lower Egypt, reported archæological discoveries, and read a description of the Rodah nilometer. The naturalists Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Savigny, indefatigable in tracking down the whole of the Egyptian fauna, described animals they had dissected and drawn after their incessant fishing and hunting expeditions. The civil engineers Girard, Le Père, Malus, and Horace Say gave the conclusions arrived at, as a result of their journeys in the provinces, on agricultural questions and questions of irrigation, geography, and cartography.

Certain suggestions indicate curiosities that were not satisfied until long afterwards. Sucy, for instance, spoke of the advantage of gaining positive knowledge of the causes

of the regular flooding of the Nile, and, to that end, of the sources of the upper waters of the river ; he wished that information could be collected on Nubia and Abyssinia. This was a manifestation of the interest felt in the problem of the sources of the Nile in the eighteenth century after Bruce's journey, an interest that was to grow greatly in the nineteenth century. The French occupation of Cairo conferred on the lower and middle valley of the Nile, in other words Egypt, the rôle which naturally belongs to it, that of a means of access to the Sudan and to Ethiopia. So also when the orientalist Ripault communicated to the Institute the fruit of his researches into the great oases of the Libyan desert : his paper led Fourier to recall the attempts made under Louis XIV to penetrate from Egypt into Nubia and Abyssinia. This too is evidence of the desire which the possession of Egypt awakens, of using that country as the basis of scientific operations for the attempt to explore Africa southwards and westwards. The work of the nineteenth century was in the germ in these aspirations, and in another outcome of them, Bonaparte's interest in the caravans arriving from Sennaar, Darfur, and Kordofan, messengers from the Black Continent of which Europe was still almost entirely ignorant.

Less remote, certainly, was the region on which General Andréossy gave information to his colleagues, that of Lake Menzaleh. The Institute was the first to be acquainted with the paper subsequently published by the *Décade*, in which the learned officer identified former branches of the Nile, explained the formation of the great coastal lakes, and determined the sites of vanished towns.

Medicine retained the important place it had taken from the outset in the preoccupations of the Academicians. They heard Desgenettes read notes from his collaborators Larrey, Bruant, Sotira, and Frank, on the epidemic maladies affecting French and natives, and on clinical or anatomical questions. Subsequently small works on the treatment of plague and of smallpox were sent to the Imprimerie Nationale for publication in French, Italian, and Arabic.

When Bonaparte proposed to start a civil hospital for

natives in Cairo, the Institute was soon associated in the project. Monge, Berthollet, and Caffarelli were made members, with Desgenettes and Larrey, of the commission appointed to study it. Clearly the first thing to be done was to see whether it was possible to make use of the only native hospital then existing, the Moristan. Desgenettes visited it in the company of an Arab sheik who was president of the Cairo Divan. He subsequently read to his colleagues in the Institute his report to Bonaparte on his visit to this establishment, into which no European had penetrated before him. He found it in a wretched state of poverty and dirtiness—twenty-five wooden beds, fifty of stone; only twenty-seven patients, uncared-for and scarcely fed; about fifteen male and female lunatics, chained in separate cells, and among them a young girl confined on the pretence that she was insane: Desgenettes had her released. In spite, however, of the dilapidation and neglectedness of the Moristan, he considered that it could be utilized, if put into repair and given a subsidy; and he advised Bonaparte to make use of it, in order to economize expense and to take account of the prejudices of the people, who preferred the help offered by this Mussulman foundation to that which French beneficence might offer elsewhere. In case, however, the general-in-chief preferred something better, Desgenettes traced in a second report published by the *Décade* the complete plan of organization of a civil hospital for three to four hundred patients, 'for the poor of Cairo and of the caravans.' Carried away by his subject, he proceeded to propose the addition to this hospital of a school of medicine, surgery, and pharmacy, sketching its methods of instruction in the most practical spirit. And as this medical instruction could only be given in French, he called for 'a sort of elementary school to prepare the youth of the country to receive in a foreign language the elements of the sciences and arts.' Thus, just as the installation of French military hospitals had led him to the project of a native civil hospital, this project in turn led to that of a school of medicine, which again led to that of an elementary school. In this sequence of proposals there were the

beginnings of a rudimentary system of organization for social welfare and education.

'An establishment of this type,' wrote Desgenettes to Bonaparte, 'will open in Egypt a source of improvement and prosperity, and the benedictions of the poor, the expression of their gratitude, will mingle with the trophies which glory is erecting for you.' Bonaparte had to do without the benedictions of the poor, because the extreme financial stringency, that plague of the Egyptian expedition, prevented him from earning them: this generous project could not be carried out for want of sufficient resources. More than a year had to pass before, under Larrey, who had replaced Desgenettes on the latter's return to France with Bonaparte, and with Belliard as head of the Cairo command, a modest civil hospital opened its doors to a few natives. But we must look beyond that belated and imperfect realization of Desgenettes' proposal in measuring the scope of his two reports. For they contain the germ of the medical work accomplished in the reign of Mehemet Ali by the Frenchman Clot Bey, with his French collaborators. It is that work that was sketched in outline in Frimaire of the year VII to the physician-Academician's audience.

His also was the project, placed before the Institute in Nivôse, of setting up in Cairo a pharmaceutical depot. Pharmacy, like medicine, was unknown to the Egyptians, whose 'apothecaries' were impostors. 'If you meet,' said Desgenettes to his colleagues, 'with establishments which improperly bear the name of pharmacy, enter them and you will see ignorance, cupidity, and charlatanism combining to prepare and sell remedies.' Educative purpose and humanitarian aim were not strangers to his proposal to organize a 'central pharmacy' which should reveal to the natives what real medicaments are and, if there were enough for them, to sell them or even supply them free. 'We may be fortunate enough later to be able to open this central pharmacy to all those who apply and to give gratuitously to the poor.' The project was considered by Berthollet and Descotils and entrusted to Boudet, the chief pharmacist of the army, to carry into execution.

These ideas of medical assistance to the natives were broached and discussed a few weeks after the masses in Cairo had murdered French medical men outside the door of ■ military hospital. The eclipse of what Denon had called 'philanthropy' had been brief.

These grave occupations were interrupted from time to time by diversions. Thus, the Institute tried to penetrate the secret of the snake-charmers. Sometimes the diversion was of the poetic order. The architect Balzac, who ended his days as inspector general of public works in Paris, was a rhymier in his leisure hours. He declaimed a 'story of the death of a young officer who was made prisoner by the Arabs at the time of the landing ■ Alexandria,' and a poem on 'the situation of the French in Egypt,' its existing and promised advantages, the military action it involved, and the 'wise political considerations' that led to the conquest. Both subjects were thus connected with the expedition. The first was emotional; the second must have led to some ironical comments, since the situation of the French in Egypt seemed to many to be no longer a subject for lyrical treatment, and the wisdom of the political considerations that had sent the army to the Nile valley had become doubtful.

Balzac's compositions seem to have been the only verses declaimed at the Institute of Egypt. Those of Parseval-Grandmaison, who was still working on his translation of 'Jerusalem Delivered,' and of Marcel, who was adapting passages of the Koran in French verse, had the distinction of appearing in the *Décade* but not of appearing before the Academicians.

The Institute of Egypt also had sittings for questions of internal organization and for elections. A resolution was adopted requiring a sort of legal deposit of printed books and periodicals at the library. As national property was to be placed at the disposal of the members, the Academician Champy was appointed administrator. The election meetings were preceded by discussion of the qualifications of the candidates. Seats had been left vacant

at the constitution of the Institute ; others became vacant through the death or departure of Academicians. The architect Norry soon tired of camp life, and secured permission to embark for France. The physicist Dubois was invalided home. The mineralogist Dolomieu was suddenly attacked by the ' blues ' which were rampant in the expeditionary corps ; he became critical, among friends, of Bonaparte, whom he declared to be more stand-offish than ' M. le duc d'Orléans at the Palais Royal ' ; he, too, was permitted to leave. He was captured at sea and suffered the trials of imprisonment in the Neapolitan gaols, reaching France only to die of the consequences of his hardships. Sucy, *ordonnateur en chef*, was also allowed to leave ; he was even more unfortunate than Dolomieu, being murdered on the inhospitable shores of Sicily. Not all of these were replaced at once. Dubois' seat was filled by the election of Larrey, surgeon-in-chief, who accompanied Napoleon's armies to the last ; Sucy was succeeded by Bourienne, Bonaparte's former fellow-student at Brienne and later his secretary at the Tuileries ; Norry by Le Père, an architect like him, later conservator of the palace of St. Cloud. The astronomer and traveller Beauchamp, formerly consul at Muscat, and the painter Rigo were added to classes which were not full (physical sciences and art and literature). That was all for the moment ; the places of Sulkowski and Dolomieu were not filled. Not that there was any lack of candidates in the ranks of the Commission or in the army ; it is, indeed, well known that Generals Reynier and Dugua aspired to seats alongside their brothers in arms Caffarelli and Andréossy ; they joined them later. No general, indeed, however highly placed, disdained academic honours—neither Desaix nor Kléber. Soon, the gaps made, alas ! by the disastrous expedition to Syria, and by the departures in Bonaparte's wake, provided the opportunity for making new immortals.

It would, moreover, be a mistake to exaggerate the distinction between those members of the Commission who were elected to the Institute and those who were not. All were living at Cairo under the same roof, or together on

bivouac or in tents, in groups detached and sent in all directions for all sorts of tasks. The *cursus honorum* was forgotten in the community of everyday life, of work and trials. One of the men who had shared this existence of savants on campaign, the young Jomard, relished the memory of the evenings at Quassim Bey's: 'Apart from the periodical sessions of the Academy of Cairo, there were informal reunions in the garden of the Institute, to which forty or fifty persons would come, every evening, to discuss plans for journeys, discoveries made, and the varied and interesting questions presented by the nature of the country, its ancient history, its government, and the customs of its inhabitants.' It is a picture that recalls the etymological origin of academies—the gardens of *Academus*.

Bonaparte had counted on the curiosity that would be aroused among the natives by the scientific establishment made up of the Institute, the Commission, and their subsidiary organizations. 'The Institute,' he wrote later, 'attracted the attention of the people. . . . It took the inhabitants a long time to understand what this assemblage of grave and studious persons was doing. They were not governing, they were not engaged in administration, they were not serving religious ends. It was supposed that they were making gold. In the end, however, a correct idea was acquired, and the savants were respected not only by the doctors of law and the leading persons in the country but even by the lowest class of the people, since they had frequent relations with the workmen, giving them indications of mechanical or chemical processes in order to direct their work. This brought them into high esteem among the people.'

The result finely analysed here was one of those which Bonaparte had promised himself from the Institute of Egypt—the effect of education. Was the moral significance of this Institute, the lesson of the things it dispensed, as generally comprehended as Bonaparte liked to imagine? All that can be said is that a small number of the enlightened natives quickly showed an intelligent curiosity about the establishment at Quassim Bey's.



The impression they gained is attested by the naïve observations of the chronicler Abderrahman Gabarti, member of the Cairo Divan. He visited the library, where he was permitted to turn over the pages of illustrated volumes of natural history, of copies of the Bible, of French translations of Arabic works, of atlases and of a set of eighteenth-century engravings of the Mussulman East. Elsewhere astronomers let him look through their telescopes and explained to him some of the rudiments of cosmography. Painters, Rigo among others, let him admire portraits of fellow-sheiks; the naturalists Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Savigny showed him their drawings of birds and fishes and their specimens in alcohol. The chemists demonstrated elementary experiments to him, initiated him into precipitates and the phenomena of crystallization, made a detonating mixture for him, which greatly frightened him, and, to reassure him, made gases explode. The physicists made a shower of sparks come from a wheel and let him feel the shock of an electrical discharge. He went through Conté's engineering workshops, noticing the precision instruments and tools 'impossible to describe.'

Not only once or alone, but several times and with co-religionists, did Abderrahman make the visits he has so picturesquely described. He himself admits that every Mussulman attracted to Quassim Bey's was received there with politeness and, indeed, respect; 'when he was seen to be an intelligent man, they redoubled their attentions.' The learned phalanx included, moreover, Arabic scholars, from whom the Egyptian visitor was surprised to hear recitations of verses from the Koran. They were, in fact, enthusiasts for Arabic literature and for fine manuscripts. One of them, Marcel, had followed on the heels of the soldiers who invaded the mosque of El Azhar, in order to save from pillage a magnificent example of the Mussulmans' sacred book; he was also working late into the nights translating and editing the fables of Loqman. A cultivated Arab might well be struck with the zeal and the knowledge of the orientalist of the Institute.

Abderrahman's impressions of his visit to Quassim Bey's

are the more noteworthy since such admiration is rarely expressed in the pages of this rancorous observer. His example shows that if the Institute of Egypt could have lasted longer it might have exercised a salutary influence over the native élite.

Much of the activity of the Institute reflected that of the members of the Science and Arts Commission, whether Academicians or not, sometimes under orders and sometimes on their own initiative. Architects and engineers were worn out with the execution of the works ordered by Bonaparte immediately after the Cairo insurrection, as a measure of security. In order to satisfy him, they had also to draw up plans for alterations to be made in the island of Rodah, which at one moment was chosen as the future headquarters of the French colony. Then came the replacement of the hastily erected temporary installations by more permanent ones, which began to give a French air to the capital of Egypt—the introduction into Cairo of French industries; the opening of cafés in the French style, of restaurants, and of a ‘Tivoli,’ a sort of casino with salons, gardens, and various attractions. Few of these innovations were carried out without the help or advice of one or other of the resourceful men gathered together at Quassim Bey’s.

Bonaparte encouraged everything that might help to cure the army of boredom or home-sickness, in a word, of ‘the blues.’ He did not consider it beneath him to concern himself with his officers’ distractions, and turned to the artists to provide them with amusement. The ‘musicographer’ Villoteau was an excellent organizer of concerts, for which he searched for European musical instruments. Five of his colleagues, Balzac, Rigel, Ripault, Rigo, and Redouté, went in search of a hall for amateur theatrical performances, and turned themselves into a committee for the purpose. They obtained their hall, and their company played Voltaire’s tragedy *La Mort de César* and Molière’s comedy *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.

Such impresario’s work remained, needless to say,

exceptional; the majority of the occasional calls on the savants and artists were for more austere purposes. Villoteau formed with Parseval and the orientalist Raige a commission charged with the taking of a census of the national properties in Cairo and the environs; Monge and Caffarelli were members of a financial council; the economist Gloutier became French commissioner with the General Divan for Egypt, a sort of Egyptian Parliament. Beauchamp was sent to Constantinople to try to enter into relations with the Porte; he fell into the hands of the English, languished in Turkish prisons until 1801, and succumbed to his sufferings almost as soon as he returned to France.

But these occasional employments were not those which do most honour to the members of the Commission. Their true title to glory is still the activity they devoted to science, technical progress, and art. This went on without intermission.

The eastern confines of Lower Egypt were visited by a commission which included the astronomers Nouet and Méchain the younger, an ordnance survey officer, Coraboeuf, the naturalists Dolomieu, Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, Savigny, Raffeneau-Delile, and Coquebert, the civil and mining engineers Gratien Le Père, Cordier, and Dupuy, and a mechanical engineer, Lenoir. In December 1798 this numerous group reached Saleyeh, which was then an advanced post in the direction of Syria. At about the same time two ex-students of the Polytechnique, Malus and Fèvre, were also exploring this region, and it was visited a little later by Jacotin, Testevuide's successor at the head of the ordnance survey, and Villiers du Terrage, a young engineer, who took advantage of the opportunity to make an excursion to the ruins of San and another to the site of Pelusa.

General Andréossy had scarcely returned from his exploration of Lake Menzaleh when he started on another journey, to the lakes of Natroun. This survey of a region hitherto unexplored, on the edge of the Libyan desert, was mainly of scientific and economic interest. The region

contains the lakes named after the soda (natron) they yield, Coptic convents which have managed to gain a meagre livelihood for fourteen centuries in these solitudes, and an important valley whose Arabic name means 'the waterless river.' Three members of the Institute, Berthollet, Fourier, and Redouté, and two of the Commission, Duchanoy (zoologist) and Regnault (engineer), were also associated with the Academician general in this expedition; in an engraving in the *Description de l'Égypte* their caravan is shown on its way through the sands.

Andréossy brought back from this excursion the material for a very curious paper which was read to the Institute and published in the *Décade*; he gave it for motto this phrase of his colleague Girard's: 'The world's past history is written on its surface.' Alongside passages describing the six lakes explored, the trade in soda, the four Coptic convents visited, and the customs of the Bedouins, the learned general's paper contained a discussion of the origins of the salt valleys that furrow the region, and of the presumed changes of the course of the Nile. Such were the speculations of an artillery general, future ambassador for the First Consul at London and Vienna, between the insurrection at Cairo and the Syrian expedition. Berthollet brought back from the same journey 'Observations on natron,' which he read to the Institute. The great chemist explains in this paper the formation of the carbonate of soda which bears that name, and shows the profit that could be made from better exploitation of the lakes.

Many other missions then covered the country, some for the preparation of the map, some for the inspection of irrigation canals. Among others, the engineers Lancret (a future member of the Institute of Egypt) and Chabrol (a future prefect of the Seine) went from end to end of the canal between Alexandria and the Nile. They brought back from their journey much more than mere topographical surveys or reports of inspection—the material for an interesting paper on the rôle of this canal, of vital importance, which they showed to be 'the necessary continuation of the canal which would connect the Red Sea

with the Nile,' the last link in the sea and river route which would join Suez with Alexandria.

To put the Red Sea into communication with the Mediterranean, to unite the two seas, was one of the objects of the Egyptian expedition. The Directory's decree appointing Bonaparte to the command of the army of the East instructed him 'to arrange for the cutting of the isthmus of Suez.' This could not be done in a short space of time, but Bonaparte had no intention of letting the order remain a dead letter. On the contrary, the longer it would take the more reason there was for making an early start with the preliminary investigations. His civil collaborators were no less impatient to ascertain on the spot the conditions in which the work could be accomplished, and to verify the data furnished by past writers in regard to the canals which had formerly existed. Thus, when Suez had been occupied and Bonaparte decided to go there in person, many members of the Institute and the Commission were anxious to accompany him; they realized the grandeur of the idea which was directing the steps of their young military chief to the shores of the Red Sea. This time, however, Caffarelli, Monge, Berthollet, the chemist Descotils, the chief engineer Le Père, the mathematician Costaz, and the draughtsman Dutertre were the only experts permitted to 'take advantage of the opportunity of visiting a point celebrated in geography and in the history of commerce.'

The road taken between Cairo and Suez—'road' meaning, of course, track—was that used by the caravans of the pilgrims to Mecca and the carriers of goods from the Indies. The column included a carriage drawn by six horses, an entire novelty in the desert; Bonaparte made no use of it, preferring to cover the stages on horseback; it may have carried in state the doyens of the Institute, Monge and Berthollet. From Suez the general-in-chief took his companions on an excursion to the springs known as 'the fountains of Moses,' on the eastern shore of the Red Sea. The civilians went by sea, the soldiers on horseback, fording the inner end of the roadstead. Some

time was spent in inspecting the springs, near which were identified the vestiges of an installation for watering ships, which had no doubt been in use when the Venetians traded with India via Suez. It was already late when they started the return journey ; the native guide tried to take the shortest cut, and led the company into a ford over which the tide had risen. The horsemen were up to their middle in the water, and their mounts were swimming. Caffarelli, with his wooden leg, was in difficulties ; all the rest were occupied with their own troubles and anxious for Bonaparte, who kept up his spirits in this misfortune. At last firm ground was reached, and the whole company got back to Suez. The misadventure brought one of the escorting horsemen who had distinguished himself on the journey a sword of honour with the inscription 'Passage through the Red Sea.' The passage had very nearly been much too like that of Pharaoh in his pursuit of Moses.

On the day on which the column set out to return to Cairo, Bonaparte, with the generals and savants, parted from it and made for the innermost end of the Gulf of Suez, in search of vestiges of the canal which had formerly carried the waters of the Red Sea into the basin of the Bitter Lakes. They followed the remains eagerly for a distance of some five leagues. Even in annals so well filled as those of Bonaparte, this discovery, the honour of which he had been set on winning himself, and this summary exploration seemed worthy of record ; Le Père, in his paper on the canal between the two seas, Fourier, in his preface to the *Description de l'Egypte*, and many historians in their wake, made a point of attributing to him the merit for it. But this diversion toward the Bitter Lakes had carried the general-in-chief and his companions far from the encampment where the bulk of the party had set up their tents for the night ; and they only reached it with difficulty, guessing their path in the dark—an episode from which narrators drew evidence of the passionate interest Bonaparte and the savants had in this exploration, for the sake of which they took the risk of exposing their small group to attack after dark, in a desert that was anything but safe.

They were determined to discover the traces of this famous canalization. Before returning to Cairo they devoted two more days to the search for further vestiges, along the part which formerly had joined the basin of the Bitter Lakes with the eastern branch of the Nile—an exploration enlivened by the pursuit of parties of Arabs, who still infested these confines of Egypt. After they had all returned to the capital Berthier wrote in triumph to Menou : ‘ We have found it, this famous canal ; we followed it five leagues from the Gulf of Suez, and we also found it in the direction of Belbeis.’

This first exploration was no more than the prologue to a much more important operation—the surveying of the isthmus of Suez. This task was undertaken by Junot, who set out for Suez with a detachment of troops. He took with him Le Père, engineer in chief, who had only just returned from his tour with Bonaparte ; Le Père’s brother Gratien ; Saint-Denis, Dubois, Chabrol, Fèvre, Villiers du Terrage, Alibert, and Duchanoy, all civil engineers or students of civil engineering ; Nouet and Méchain, astronomers ; Coraboeuf, ordnance survey officer ; and the unfortunate poet Parseval, who was proceeding to take up without enthusiasm the post of Customs officer to which he had just been appointed.

The surveying of the isthmus was a delicate operation, requiring the utmost precision ; and it was rendered more difficult by the conditions in which it was carried out. It was impossible for the persons engaged in it to be too scattered without risking being carried off by looting parties of the unsubjugated Bedouins. If the carefully hoarded water supply ran out it could only be replaced by a return to Suez. The supplies had been reduced to a minimum to avoid overburdening the convoy. They were bad conditions of work, but Le Père and his subordinates tried to make up for them by rigorously conscientious methods of operation. ‘ Any doubt,’ the engineer-in-chief wrote later, ‘ was sufficient ground for repeating an operation from the beginning. There were several occasions on which we did not hesitate to retrace our steps for more than a

league to dispose of our doubts.' This care for exactitude did not prevent the technicians from finding their calculations vitiated in the end by errors. But, for all that, after three weeks they had made progress with their mission; they ascertained that the plain of Suez was very little above the level of the Red Sea, and concluded that it would be easy to bring the waters of that sea into the hollow of the Bitter Lakes. They had just planted their benchmarks in the interior of the basin of these lakes when the starting of the Syrian expedition forced them to interrupt their labours and return to Cairo. They were to take up the work on their return.

Once begun, these comings and goings in the isthmus in January and February 1799 were sure to have their echo at Quassim Bey's. But it was not until later that the Institute listened to communications on the subject. In the summer of 1799 Monge read a paper on the fountains of Moses; Costaz analysed—a scientist's whim—the composition of the sand of the desert, and noted in it 'that alkaline substance which makes it crackle underfoot like snow'; finally, Le Père elaborated a report on the town and port of Suez, followed by a 'note on the first operations for the surveying and contouring of the ancient canal.'

While Le Père's staff was measuring the isthmus of Suez, Vivant-Denon went up the Nile valley from Cairo to the first cataract. Having exhausted the charms of Cairo, where he had made a large number of sketches, he had proposed to leave for Sinai with a caravan of Arabs who had come thence and were returning. But the leader of the caravan had refused to accept responsibility for his safety. At that moment a convoy of munitions for Desaix was leaving Cairo for Upper Egypt, and he joined it and embarked on a felucca. After two or three days of slow navigation on the Nile, the pyramids of Sakkarah appeared in the distance; Denon sketched them from on board. Then, in the middle of November, he joined General Belliard in Middle Egypt; he did not leave him until more



than six months later, in July 1799. He shared the destinies of the 21st semi-brigade, its fatigues and privations and combats. At first the operations he was following took him only through a region of little interest for the archaeologist and artist; he soothed his impatience for artistic experiences by drawing scenes of Arab encampments, French bivouacs, native types, santons (Mohammedan monks), a sacred tree, and, from information given by his new companions at arms, episodes of the battle of Sediman, won by Desaix over the Mamelukes in the preceding October. In December, however, Desaix, who had returned from Cairo with reinforcements, undertook the pursuit of the Mamelukes along the narrow passage which constitutes Upper Egypt; and an uninterrupted march began which ended only at Syene (Assouan) and Philæ.

Denon was already too familiar with warfare not to foresee the trials this hard campaign would have in store for him. But he was not afraid of them: 'I was accustomed to bivouacking,' he said, 'and was not afraid of army biscuit.' All he feared was 'loss of time and lack of pencils, paper and talent.' He is perhaps the only one who 'stood to gain out of it all neither glory nor promotion.' But his ardour was no less than that of any soldier; he was glad to have resumed his 'post in the advance guard of the expedition.' The reason for his high spirits was that he was going 'to break new ground,' to penetrate the mystery of a country of which Europeans had as yet but a very superficial knowledge, because travellers had never extended their investigations more than a few yards from the banks of the Nile. His expedition was to be his own initiation into the architectural splendours of Upper Egypt, enabling him to reveal them to the French.

At Ashmounein he stood before a celebrated portico, of which only vestiges now remain. 'I sighed with happiness . . . this was the first monument which could serve me as a type of Egyptian architecture.' These stones, which had been waiting there for him for four thousand years, to give



VIVANT-DENON DRAWING A RUIN (above)  
 FRENCH SAVANTS MEASURING THE SPHINX (below)  
*Engravings from Vivant-Denon: Voyage en Egypte*



him an idea of the perfection of the arts of ancient Egypt, revealed to him the beauty of an architecture of which he had had no suspicion. His admiration placed it at once in the rank it merited : 'The Greeks invented nothing.' Think of the almost sacrilegious character of that statement, destroying a dogma which for centuries had made of ancient Greece and Rome the sources of the plastic arts ! But it was not in front of the portico of Hermopolis that Denon, if the phrase may be permitted, 'saw the light.' He had just had to continue past ruins which he would have liked to visit, and to stop three weeks in a modern town of no interest to him, fretting at military exigencies that regulated the movements of troops with no regard to the needs of archæology, when the army reached the proximity of Dendera. Desaix and Belliard owed him compensation : they procured it for him by giving him time to admire the magnificent temple there. Denon was absolutely dazzled, thrilled, amazed. He was not alone in this ; one of his friends among the officers, suffering like so many others from the disenchantment inflicted by Egypt on these conquerors, declared himself to be 'cured' by Dendera, which had 'made up for all the fatigues' of the expedition. This temple of Ptolemy, perfectly preserved, with vestiges of colouring still visible on the ceiling of its columned hall, so imposing and yet so graceful, taught Denon 'that beauty of architecture is not to be sought only in the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders ; beauty exists wherever there is harmony of parts.' Before its splendour the generals forgot for a moment the cares of pursuing the Mamelukes. Belliard stayed with the artist as he drew on the platform of the temple a zodiac which later was transported to Quassim Bey's, and then to the Louvre, under the supervision of Baron Denon, who had become curator of the imperial museum.

The charm which had worked on him at Dendera remained unbroken for the rest of the campaign ; the attraction of the discoveries made kept him alert in spite of severe and sometimes exhausting hardships. At each stage he was reinvigorated by spectacles that renewed his admiration.

Thebes, seen from the left bank of the Nile, was so beautiful and so grandiose that at the sight of these gigantic ruins the soldiers began to clap their hands. Denon, with little time in which to work, sketched feverishly, as if he were afraid that 'Thebes might escape from me.' Then came Ermant, where there was then a temple which has since been destroyed; Esneh, which so enchanted him that he thought it 'the most perfect monument of ancient architecture'; Edfou, the dimensions and position of which delighted him; Syene, and finally Philæ, where he was overjoyed at being for several weeks 'the owner of seven or eight monuments within a distance of three hundred fathoms.' He was in raptures as he worked there, and, for the first time, could work at his leisure.

The return journey, down the Nile or along its banks, brought him the spectacle of Kom-Ombo, proudly poised on a promontory, and took him back to Thebes, of which only a glimpse had been caught on the journey up the river. Then there were Luxor, Karnak, Medinet-Abou, the Ramesseum, Gournah, and the Valley of the Kings. The magnificence and immensity of Karnak disconcerted and baffled him: he felt lost there. But the exploration of the tombs of the kings had entirely new sensations in store for him—sculptures, bas-reliefs, stuccos, and paintings that revealed to him aspects of Egyptian art of which he had had not the slightest suspicion. The military operations took him back several times to Thebes, an inexhaustible field, to which he was never tired of returning. There was a fresh thrill for him in every new secret delivered up to him by this land, so rich in antiquity. On the day when ■ papyrus was brought to him he was almost overcome: 'I did not know what to do with my treasure, I was so afraid of damaging it; I dared not touch this book, the most ancient book known up to that day; I dared not entrust it to anyone or deposit it anywhere—the whole of the flock in the quilt under which I slept seemed to me insufficient for packing it softly enough.'

When Denon returned to Cairo, in the summer of 1799, the sketches he brought, made, he says, 'mostly on my knee

or standing, even on horseback, and without ever finishing one as I should have liked,' were of enormous interest to his colleagues of the Institute and the Commission. They were not content with being shown his sketches or even with his comments on them in conversation: the Institute counted on him to give it his first formal account of his impressions of the region he had been the first Academician to traverse. It was insisted that he should give it the rough sketch of the account of his journey which he proposed to write at leisure; and he did so, writing a 'lecture for reading to the Cairo Institute.' It is only a few pages, and has not the charm of the book he published later; but at least it rapidly sketches the archæological stages of his itinerary in Upper Egypt; it reveals something of the revelation he had had of Egyptian art, and here and there it is lit up by the enthusiasm that filled him.

It was the beginning of February 1799 when Belliard's division, with which Denon had gone, reached Syene (Assouan), the southern frontier of Egypt, and July when the artist returned to Cairo. In the interval—more precisely, between February 10th and June 14th—Bonaparte had advanced with fifteen thousand men as far as Acre, in Syria, and then returned, at the head of rather fewer. The Syrian expedition was a new disturbing element in the life of the Institute, which never experienced the calm in which scientific research, artistic studies, and technical work usually progress. No learned company ever had a more troubled existence from beginning to end.

It seemed as if, in face of so much courage and talent, devoted to the service of science and art, even the passion of the enemy should be disarmed. But nothing ever disarmed it! The Institute of Egypt was itself made fun of by English humourists, and pretty heavily at that. One caricaturist across the Channel imagined a couple of French savants pursued by crocodiles, which were biting the thigh of one of them and the rump of the other. These savants were credited with the authorship of treatises on 'the education of crocodiles' and 'the rights of the crocodile.' The scene was entitled 'The insurrection of the amphibian

Institute.' The day was to come before long when less fanciful and better informed Englishmen would show juster appreciation of the results of the labours of the Institute and the Commission, by trying to lay hands on them.

## XI

### 'PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE'

Partant pour la Syrie,  
Le jeune et beau Dunois

--The handsome young Dunois, just off to Syria, with his story to be set to music later by Queen Hortense of Holland, Bonaparte's step-daughter, can scarcely have had so many cares as had the proconsul in Egypt of the French Republic. The alarms of the insurrection in Cairo had passed, but the French expedition in Egypt had still to battle with its financial afflictions. Money troubles do not kill, say the French--*plaie d'argent n'est pas mortelle*; but they seriously interfere with the health of colonizing enterprises. The administration continued to be dogged by this need of money, which remained with it more or less to the end of its existence. In the autumn of 1798 and the first months of 1799 the need was more pressing than ever. The army chest was empty. Pay was in arrear. The burden of public expenditure was growing. The preparation for the Syrian expedition brought fresh expenses. The conquest of Upper Egypt which was in progress furnished as yet only irregular supplies to the Treasury.

In our day colonizing expeditions know nothing of this agony of impecuniosity. They are entered on at the expense of the home country, which also meets the cost of establishing the occupation and often makes good for ■ long time the deficits in the local budget. The home government makes provision in its own budget, guarantees ■ loan which it authorizes the colonial government to issue, and the whole thing is simple. There was nothing of the



sort to help the Egyptian expedition. It was undertaken on the strength of a small grant from the Directory, but had to continue and complete its work out of its own resources. The army and the civil administration had to live on the country.

Shortly after the capture of Cairo, Peyrusse had written that Bonaparte was 'busy collecting and organizing the immense resources which our arms have acquired.' There had been a prompt awakening out of the illusion that the resources were 'immense.' Bonaparte had in consequence to make use of every possible device for increasing his revenue. A glance at the accounts of the expedition for the second half of the year VI is eloquent of the dearth of revenue and the hunt for cash necessitated by the circumstances. The accounts show the receipts from forced loans, fines, and confiscations. We find in them the yield of a sale of the jewels, gold and silver objects, precious fabrics, and stocks of coffee or rice, confiscated in the houses of the Mamelukes; and the figures for these items, which themselves speak volumes for the destitute condition of the army treasury, reveal that they did not greatly enrich it. The legitimate confiscation of the properties of the Mamelukes did not fill the government's coffers. The French authorities thus had perforce to keep up their fiscal efforts, and the fiscal side became one of the stumbling blocks of the expedition, one of the factors which did most to work against the ingratiation attempted by Bonaparte's native policy.

Ten days after the insurrection at Cairo, orders were given for the land tax, the *miri*, which at all times had been the principal tax in Egypt, to be collected. Collection was carried out under the conditions suggested by the General Divan—with the aid of native auxiliaries, in accordance with the custom of the country, farmers of taxes sending in tenders for each group of villages. This system of farming, used in place of the European system of administration, had later to be abandoned. But with what impatience the receipt of the *miri* was awaited! The *ordonnateur en chef* had been unable in the preceding month to give his sub-

ordinates anything better in the way of salary than promissory notes and diamonds ! The Customs revenue had been next to nothing, and the revenue from land registration fees had dried up—he had already anticipated it by means of bonds issued against receipts still to come from the yield of that all-important source. Thus the collection of the *miri* had to be expedited. Berthier was requested to let the generals know that the subsistence of the army depended on it. ‘ It is indispensable,’ wrote Bonaparte, ‘ that within a week the villages shall have made payment ’ ; a mobile column would be sent to those which had not done so. Thus the necessity for quick results risked upsetting the intended precautions in regard to the collection of the *miri*, perfectly legitimate though that operation was, inaugurating the era of regular taxation and probably closing that of oppressive expedients.

But even when expedited it was impossible for the operation to be completed in a week ; Bonaparte and his representatives, moreover, had no desire for it to descend to arbitrariness. It was also advisable not to depend exclusively on the land tax. It was thus of importance to the government to create revenues independent of this tax. A commission was appointed to take a census of the ‘ national properties ’ in Cairo and its environs : town and country houses, gardens, palm groves, and rural properties. The census was followed by their transfer to the domains department, which leased them or worked them itself. A little later there was instituted a ‘ general inspectorate of domains ’ ; the holder of the post, Reynier, brother of the general, was charged with the duty of touring the provinces of Egypt to take account of the properties belonging to the Republic and the means of developing and working them, perfecting methods of agriculture and stock rearing, and of fertilizing uncultivated land. In this field the interest of the state as owner stimulated its desire to develop the natural wealth of the country, and thus was in harmony with the general interest. Moreover, the administration and inspection of domains provided the rough model for institutions which saw the light long afterwards,

between 1876 and 1879. But the working of the national properties, of which as yet not even a record existed, was clearly a task that would take considerable time to organize ; no immediate revenue could be expected from it by the Treasury.

The revival of trade was another means of working simultaneously for the good of the finances and of the country. Bonaparte carried out his earlier idea of a trading company by constituting a '*Compagnie d'Egypte*,' with a capital of 300,000 francs, in which the army chest invested 30,000 francs. This was to be a semi-public concern, carried on jointly by the colonial government, certain merchants associated in it, and shareholders. But the creation of this commercial company had no effect on the economic situation : the *Compagnie d'Egypte* had soon to go into liquidation. This innovation did nothing, therefore, to bring the peaceful customs revenue offices out of their stagnation ; and the efforts to create a current of trade between Alexandria and the Tripolitanian ports of Derna and Tripoli were equally fruitless. An unfortunate merchant, Arnaud, was sent there on a mission, but perished in the desert of Barca.

A little more could be hoped for from the traffic between Suez and the eastern ports of the Red Sea, Jeddah and Mocha ; for the sherif of Mecca, to whom they were subject, found it to his interest not to let this trade be entirely suspended, and the English were unable to obstruct it. Bonaparte accordingly devoted special attention to its revival. This was one of his reasons for the journey to Suez, and also one of the reasons for the urgent need for the occupation of Kosseir, the port of Upper Egypt on the Red Sea<sup>1</sup>. While at Suez he received in audience a number of *reis*<sup>2</sup> and lavished on them assurances of protection and encouragement. There was more prospect of practical results from his efforts in this direction ; but the results would still be slow in showing themselves.

<sup>1</sup> The occupation of Kosseir was attempted without success in January 1799, and was ultimately effected in the following May.

<sup>2</sup> Masters of Arab *boutres* sailing between Arabia and Egypt.

As regards internal trade, of which the Nile was the principal medium, there was a good deal of cruising up and down to protect it. But here again, though private traders transporting provisions profited from this equally with the army, the effect could only be gradual; and private prosperity, and public revenues with it, could only grow as business revived.

In order to improve the financial administration, Bonaparte set up a financial council, composed of the administrators Poussielgue, d'Aure, and Blanc, a merchant, James, and two members of the Institute of Egypt, Monge and Caffarelli. The fairly elastic programme drawn up for this new organ included the study of the ‘operations possible in the existing situation of Egypt for procuring money for the army and increasing its resources’—a formula which was more explicit in regard to the need felt for money than the nature of the ‘operations’ for procuring it. It is true that this paragraph was preceded by one which was a little more definite; the council was to consider ‘the monetary system and denominations, and the changes possible to the advantage of our finances.’ This was a delicate way of expressing the idea of so modifying the value and nomenclature of the currency as to bring profit to the state. But it is rare for changes of this sort, when they become known, to give as much satisfaction to the public as to the government. This was therefore an expedient which might bring in immediate profit, but of which it would be necessary to make only discreet and cautious use.

Was there another reason for the sparseness of revenues and the abundance of expenditure—embezzlement? Menou claimed again and again that part of the money intended for the Treasury, the funds for meeting expenditure, leaked *en route*. He continually denounced the unscrupulousness of the tax collectors. ‘It is easy,’ he wrote a little later, ‘to draw twenty-five millions from Egypt. But if these twenty-five millions, instead of reaching their destination, are kept back on their way, at least in part, it is evident that the army will not have anything to live on.’

The general was indulging in manifest exaggerations;

but his correspondents, Bonaparte, Berthier, and certain provincial commandants, did not merely reject his statements without more ado. The staff of the financial administration had had to be constituted with the material the command had at its disposal. Some of the Copt intendants had unquestionably made illicit gains, though others, for example Moallem Jacob, who was attached to Desaix in Upper Egypt, proved admirable servants.<sup>1</sup> The French officials, although drawn from the most varied sources, counted in their ranks some remarkable individuals. The quality of the supreme direction was assured by officials of the finest type—Poussielgue, d'Aure, Estève, Peyrusse. The only one about whose correctitude doubts arose after his departure was Sucy. In a word, the 'leakages' do not seem to have been considerable.

But, whichever way he turned, Bonaparte was unable to find a means of rapidly replenishing his wallet. Thus the necessities of his situation soon forced him into measures that were more effectual for his purposes but aroused more feeling among the population—general taxation, extraordinary levies, and requisitions. Particularly during January 1799, orders were issued one after another, either to line the government purse or to meet expenses without actual cash disbursement. Generals were ordered to hasten the collection of the *miri* and send the yield to Cairo; Estève was ordered to detach an official to receive and bring to Cairo the money collected in various towns of Lower Egypt; Poussielgue was ordered to see that the farmers of taxes paid in their receipts at the dates specified in their instructions. A commission was set up to expedite the collection of contributions in kind in four provinces of Upper Egypt just conquered. Requisitions for horses, mules, and camels were made in Lower Egypt—not the first—and, almost at the moment of their conquest, in Middle and Upper Egypt. The rice-fields of the Delta

<sup>1</sup> Moallem Jacob showed such devoted loyalty to Desaix and to the French, and rendered such good service, that he was later appointed general and given the command of a 'Coptic legion.' He embarked with the French army when it evacuated the country, and died on passage.

were leased to rice dealers for cash down. Two months’ payment in advance was demanded from all the successful tenderers for leases of industrial or agricultural enterprises. The land registry was requested to hasten the collection of the sums due to it. Among others, a sum of 205,000 *livres*, reported by Poussielgue to be receivable, was to be recovered immediately. A major and a hundred men were placed at the disposal of the administration ‘for distraints.’

Payment was also to be exacted without delay of all arrears of extraordinary levies already imposed on various categories or corporations of natives—wives of Mamelukes, Damascene merchants, Copts, water-carriers, and so on. And with what urgency Poussielgue was ordered to recover these sums! They were to be ‘paid on the spot, to enable army pay to be disbursed.’ The need was, indeed, imperative. A week later Bonaparte returned to the charge, writing to Poussielgue: ‘You will let me have a report to-morrow on our resources and our means of getting in money. Try to have 200,000 to 300,000 *livres* for us.’ And as he was not sure that this requirement could be met out of arrears of forced loans already imposed, Bonaparte ordered a new one, to be levied on the best of all milch cows, ‘the Copts.’ The Copts, promoted willy-nilly to the rank of bankers to the government, were to pay 50,000 *livres*, in five weekly instalments of 10,000. They were to be reimbursed by mortgages granted by the administration on the grain crops of Upper Egypt—a pretty case of eating the corn before it was ripe.

Then, in order to extinguish inexpensively some of the debts accumulated by the expedition from the outset, the order was given, just before the departure for Syria, for all the forced loans raised in Cairo, Alexandria, Rosetta, Damietta, Foueh, and, in fact, everywhere, to be repaid by means of houses and other real estate belonging to the Republic. Thus, to free the government from pressing debts, part at all events was to be dissipated of the national properties in respect of which an inspectorate of domains had been set up! This method of repayment smacked strongly of the financial policy of those elder sons who

take bites out of their heritage before receiving it. From the point of view of the creditors, was it any more satisfactory? Were the native corporations which had been compelled, whether they liked or not, to advance to Bonaparte ready money, in hard cash, satisfied at seeing it returned only in the form of a house, or a garden, with which they might be able to do nothing? It may well be doubted.

Some of the commandants of provinces grew tired of sending to Cairo much more money than Cairo sent them: they protested, and in what a tone! Here, for instance, is what General Dugua, commanding at Mansourah, wrote to Poussielgue in Frimaire, year VII: 'Think of the inhabitants who see their property being continually seized under requisition, without any indication either of the manner or the date of repayment; of the claims of those who have supplied bread, rice, meat, oil, wood, grain, and fodder for a whole month without even receiving an acknowledgment of these advances! Add to this the destruction of trade, and the certainty of the discontent of the great majority of the people; and you will be able to tell whether the commander of a province, in which all this is going on because the funds it provides have been sent elsewhere, can keep silent.'

Thus Bonaparte had found himself compelled, in the phrase used later in Algeria, to 'sweat the burnous,' or rather the galabieh.<sup>1</sup> That has never been possible without the wearer of burnous or galabieh noticing it. The invader was never regarded by the natives as a liberator, because there could not be such a thing as a non-Mussulman liberator in their eyes; and for his alleged services he was decidedly exacting.

But he was strong, and active in all sorts of spheres, in his effort to organize a rule which he desired should be neither ephemeral nor precarious nor ineffective. It was after the insurrection at Cairo that the French army had stabilized and perfected its installation in Egypt. Until

<sup>1</sup> The dress of the Egyptian fellah.

then it had remained, even at Cairo, encamped rather than established, in the conditions in which it had first taken up its quarters. These were not always the best of conditions, either for safety or for the needs of a prolonged stay. All sorts of steps were then taken in order to make the occupation more secure and the life of the occupying force less trying. Soon four main forts and four intermediate ones were erected at Cairo. They defended the approach to the city, and commanded its respect. Their names affirmed the ownership assured by their ramparts and their artillery. They were French names, mostly of officers who had fallen in the course of the campaign—Forts Camin, Sulkowsky, Dupuy, Grézieu, Venoux, Mireur, Couroux; Institute Fort, and the General's Signal Station. They formed a sort of cordon of French sentinels, mounting guard round the conquered city. Ezbekieh square, the site of Headquarters, was levelled, cleared, and widened. Bonaparte's house<sup>1</sup> was isolated and embellished in the course of reconstruction: 'A terrace overlooking the square offered the double advantage of promenade and defence; two superb Turkish gardens, transformed into gardens in the French style, surrounded the residence on the side looking out over the country.' Roads were widened or new ones cut to bring the principal strategic points in Cairo into communication with one another. All the military hospitals (one of them, that of Birket el Fil, had been attacked during the insurrection and almost invaded) were concentrated, so that there were now only three—one in the Citadel, one at Gizeh, and a third on Ibrahim Bey's farm. The rearrangement enabled them to be increased. The village of Gizeh took on the air of a little town, within a crenelated enclosure that protected the artillery establishments, a country house for the general-in-chief, and a residence for the staff officers of the Engineers. Two batteries were placed at the ends of the island of Rodah; they could cross their fire on the Nile with that of the defence works at Gizeh.

<sup>1</sup> The palace of Mohammed Elfi Bey, on what is now the site of Shephard's Hotel.



Fortification works, reconstruction of buildings, road-making, installations, all called for a feverish activity that provided work for the natives—paid work—and showed the most intelligent among them the superiority of the processes employed by the Westerners. 'All these works were completed within a short time,' notes Abderrahman Gabarti. 'There was no forced labour, all work was well paid for ; the instruments used by the French were of great assistance ; for cutting stone and sawing wood they had tools much better made than those used in Cairo.' This Arab writer showed judgment here, and drew a timely lesson from works intended once for all to train guns on any future insurgents, to facilitate the concentration of troops against them, to remove administrative departments and hospitals out of reach of aggression, and to repel attacks from external enemies. This was not the only lesson to be drawn from them. The steps taken, whether by way of precaution or improvement, showed the determination of those who took them to settle, to implant and entrench themselves.

The whole of Egypt was then covered with a network of fortified positions, stretching from the defence systems of Cairo and Alexandria right across Lower Egypt. The plan was considered of constructing a fort at the '*Ventre de la Vache*,' the point in the Delta where later, under Mehemet Ali, there was erected the curtain with crenelated towers which is admired to this day. In Middle and Upper Egypt the network of forts stretched from Gizeh to Syene (Assouan). There were great difficulties in recruiting labour and in completing the works, soldiers were available only in small numbers, natives were often reluctant to accept employment, tools and means of transport had to be improvised ; but, in spite of all, the work was brought to a finish with a rapidity that surprised and impressed the Egyptians.

Other measures ordered or planned during the same period arose from the same determination to organize for permanent settlement, and were dictated by the needs of an occupying force of superior civilization to that of

the occupied country. The 'sanitary committee' of Cairo made the city a little healthier. The canal that crossed the city, the Khalig, was choked with mud and degenerating into a night-soil dump, an open sewer: Bonaparte ordered it to be cleaned and made navigable as far as the Nile throughout the year. New regulations strengthened those already in force for the management of quarantine camps and the prevention of epidemic diseases: commissions were charged with 'prosecutions for offences and infractions of the sanitary laws'; the offences were divided into three categories and punished according to their gravity, the penalties ranging from a fine to the capital sentence. When an epidemic of plague broke out, raging severely among the garrison of Alexandria, and less so in that of Damietta, Bonaparte increased the staff of the health administrations at Alexandria, Aboukir, Rosetta, Cairo, Damietta, Bourlos, and Katieh.

The orders given for the lighting of the streets in Cairo were enforced. Street lamps placed at regular intervals took the place of private lanterns. The cost was recovered from well-to-do people, so that 'lighting should not have to be paid for by the poor and become an object of vexation.' 'This arrangement gave a great deal of satisfaction to the poor,' admits an Arab chronicler who is very sparing with compliments.

For communication between the two banks of the Nile, the ferry boats used by the natives could not meet the needs of a French army with a swarm of establishments on the island of Rodah and at Gizeh. A bridge of boats was thrown between Ibrahim Bey's farm and Rodah, and another from Rodah to the left bank of the river. They were the first bridges to cross the Nile and the precursors of the metal arches under which it now flows. In certain ways Egypt began then a course of rejuvenation.

It was necessary to render communications easy and rapid not only between the strategic points of each city but between those of the whole country. The Nile served this purpose in many cases, but not in all. Thus, after communications by water Bonaparte's attention was directed

to land communications. The engineers were directed to make surveys with a view to creating in Egypt, where no roads yet existed, a network of roads connecting Cairo with Alexandria and both cities with various provincial centres. In order to be passable during the inundation, the new main roads, which could take advantage of existing dykes and of certain bridges already thrown over canals, needed to be raised above the level of the flood waters. But the lack of money made it necessary to renounce the idea of these roads.<sup>1</sup>

Neither Turks nor Mamelukes had had the slightest interest in public assistance. The sick poor had no means of obtaining medical care. When a caravan of merchants or pilgrims arrived, it had similarly no alternative but to care for its own patients, or, if they were no longer able to travel with it, to abandon them at the place of encampment. The reorganization of the French military hospitals directed Bonaparte's attention, and that of his civil collaborators, to this state of things, and between November 21st and the middle of December the Institute of Egypt discussed the plan of the creation of a civil hospital 'for the poor of Cairo and the sick of the caravans.' The chronic financial crisis was rarely more harmful than it was in the difficulties it put in the way of carrying out this humanitarian project. For its realization would have done Bonaparte more honour than a platonic intention. Would the natives have thanked him for it? It is questionable. It was not without reason that Desgenettes warned him of their prejudices against the help his beneficence had prepared for them in an establishment set up by the French on the French model. Even in the matter of medical assistance, time would have been needed to surmount the distrust and prejudices of the Egyptians.

Money and time—these two words were continually recurring in connexion with Bonaparte's administrative

<sup>1</sup> They were not indispensable ; Egypt was one of the few countries which at a pinch could do without roads. She had none, indeed, until the beginning of the twentieth century and the coming of the motor car.

work in Egypt. They expressed the two main conditions lacking for his civil activity. Money was lacking for the execution of projects he conceived; time for reaping the benefit of those which he was able to carry out.

Bonaparte quickly felt the awkwardness for the command and its organs of being stationed within Cairo, in the midst of the native population. He thought for a time of installing 'the headquarters of the French colony' on the island of Rodah. This pleasant island, which contained then only the buildings of the *mekyas*, the famous nilometer, two hamlets, and some gardens, attracted him through its convenience and the charms of which one of his officers sings the praises in his diary. Bonaparte had the idea, unknown in his epoch, of the advantage both for the occupying force and the general population of avoiding an intermingling that involved annoyances on both sides, by making use of Rodah. With his headquarters there, and with the departments he had already detached at Kasr el Aini and at Gizeh, the French city would have been developed outside and alongside the native quarter, exactly ■ has since been done in Morocco, at Fez, Meknès, and Marrakesh. But in this case also the project was interfered with by other expenses and other cares. Bonaparte was decidedly attracted by these external quarters, which have since been occupied by the European element in Cairo; he thought of sharing the two islands of Rodah and Gezireh between deserving officers of his army—a project revealing an inclination toward military colonization and also the principle of gifts of territory which the future Emperor was to apply on a larger scale for the benefit of his servants. But this project also remained on paper.<sup>1</sup>

A French scholar, Rhôné, who visited Egypt in 1864–1865, with a party of artists and archæologists, made a remark full of interest on the probable consequences on the architecture and planning of Cairo of a permanent French

<sup>1</sup> The intention was carried out only in favour of three generals, Lannes, Murat, and Donmartin, who were given town houses, which they occupied. The houses were soon of little interest to them: Lannes and Murat left Egypt with Bonaparte, and Donmartin died.

occupation. 'If the French occupation had lasted,' he wrote, 'it would certainly have rendered many services to Egypt; but the innovating activity of the colony would rapidly have made of Cairo what it has made of Algiers, a bastard modern city, and no one in our generation would have been able to see the things we still admire.' This is probably true to some extent, since the installation of Europeans in a foreign country is unfortunately subject to inexorable laws, and also because the French of that period, even the artists and men of taste, had not a sense of the beauty of the Arab monuments—as Rhôné has also observed. It had been difficult enough for them to admire the art of the Pharaohs in their faithfulness to their cult of classic antiquity, and they had been quite unable to carry independence of judgment so far as to admire Mussulman art. But the effects of the vandal spirit attributed to them in retrospect by Rhôné would have been limited at Cairo, for two reasons. The first is the intention Bonaparte had had of transferring his quarters and those of his lieutenants to the islands of Rodah and Gezireh; the second, which would have been still more decisive, is the intention he also had of establishing the capital of French Egypt elsewhere than at Cairo.

He intended Alexandria to be the capital. 'Cairo,' he himself wrote, 'was the natural capital of the Fatimite empire, which covered Syria. Alexandria would be the capital of the French for the same reason for which it was that of the Greek kings. From Alexandria to Toulon there is only the sea to cross. Alexandria could be made very strong. It must be the capital, the centre for defence, the refuge, the port, and the storehouse of any European masters.' This was written by Napoleon, but the view does not date from Saint Helena. On August 18th, 1799, on the eve of his departure from Egypt, Bonaparte expressed it to Kléber, urging him not to forget that the capital would have to be Alexandria and requesting him to assemble there all the establishments with which a capital ought to be furnished. Strange as this conception of the respective rôles of Cairo and Alexandria may be, there may well have

been something to say for it, since, during the period which was a sort of complement of that of the Egyptian expedition, the reign of Mehemet Ali, Alexandria was in practice used as the capital as much as if not more than Cairo. In any case, Cairo would have been spared material disturbances in so far as the centre of government was transferred to Alexandria.

A curious study might be made of ‘the blues (*le cafard*) in the Egyptian army.’ It would be necessary first to usurp the rôle of a member of the French Academy as lexicologer in order to define this slang word, familiar in the French colonies but not yet allowed official recognition: ‘*Cafard*, masculine noun, employed figuratively to denote a sort of nostalgia and “fit of the blues,” which overcomes Europeans from time to time in foreign countries.’

The army of the East and the civilians who accompanied it landed in Egypt in the height of the summer. The dog-days did not help the French to admire the country in which they were being roasted in their cloth suits and their hats of leather or felt. What is more, the fashion of their day had not instilled into them the taste for the exotic which enables discomforts to be ignored amid the appreciation of the spectacle of the life of primitive peoples and the beauty of unfamiliar landscapes. Their first impression of Egypt had thus been disappointing, and had put them into a frame of mind in which many of them had eyes only for the dark side of the picture, which seemed to them at first to loom large indeed.

Here, for example, is modern Alexandria as it appeared to André Peyrusse: ‘What mean streets, what degradation, what a swarm of Jews and Greeks, Turks and Arabs! What dirt! What wretched hovels!’ This civilian’s judgment is echoed by that of a military man, Brigadier General Laugier: ‘It is difficult to imagine an uglier town. Not a trace is left of its ancient splendour. . . . No repairs are done to the houses: half a house will be inhabited while the rest is falling to pieces.’

The villages of the Delta did not reconcile the newcomers

to Egypt. 'Their houses are pitiable. It would be difficult to find anywhere a more fertile country with a more wretched and brutalized people. They would rather have one of our soldiers' buttons than a crown-piece worth six francs. In the villages they do not even know what a pair of scissors is. Their houses are made of a little mud. They have no other furniture than a straw mat and two or three earthenware pots.' Such was Laugier's impression of the countryside and the country people of Egypt.

Even Cairo scarcely had at first any better press among the occupying authorities. Peyrusse administers summary justice to it in these few lines: 'This town does not merit its great reputation. It is dirty, ill-built, and full of filthy dogs. There is nothing extraordinary about the buildings.' And again the military officer echoes the civilian: 'Cairo,' wrote Laugier on his arrival, 'is an enormous town, but for the most part very badly built. It is remarkable for its great dirtiness.'

The majority, in fact, of the soldiers, officers, and even civilians found Cairo not at all to their liking. Most of them were disappointed and dismayed. Narrow, tortuous, and often sordid streets; unattractive dwellings, apart from the palaces of the beys and the homes of the rich, and altogether wretched ones for the poor; scarcely any other furniture than mats, carpets, divans, and chests; cafés in which they had to sit on the ground, cross-legged, or at best on narrow benches; customs utterly different from those of the West; no fermented liquor, neither wine nor beer; queerly prepared food; bread in flabby, heavy cakes; the women immured in impenetrable harems from which they emerged only in veils; a very unattractive type of women of the sort that made a profession of being accessible; shops filled with articles and utensils unfamiliar to a Westerner; a population speaking an unfamiliar language and of an inscrutable character—all this had baffled the French and put them out of their element. Almost the only things, at first, that pleased them were the Moorish baths, the donkeys—the 'Cairo cabs,' which were immediately appreciated to the length of being made

use of for fun—and the donkey-boys. Disappointment and the sense of exile produced dejection and nostalgia.

The effect is plainly visible in the severity, even the exaggeration, of some of the descriptions of the scene. Here is one from the diary kept by a brave and cultured officer, Detroye—he was killed at Acre: 'In my daily walks I realize more and more that everything here tires the senses of a European. Leaving Cairo on the Suez side, one finds an arid, white desert; fine sand and a burning wind obscure the vision and interfere with breathing; a smell of rotting corpses offends the nostrils. The Bedouins' huts spread over the plain remind you of the lot of so many of your compatriots—an early assassination. Walking in the direction of Boulak or Fostat, one may see some cultivated plots and mountains of ruins, a few sycamores, a few tamarinds, a few clumps of trees, their leaves covered with dust, and a river of mud: those are the main elements of the picture. Returning to Cairo, what is there to see? Narrow streets, unpaved and dirty; houses in ruins and of sombre appearance; public buildings like prisons, shops like stables, an atmosphere heavy with dust and dirt; blind men, one-eyed men, bearded men covered with rags, crowded together in the streets or sitting down, their pipes in their mouths, like monkeys in the opening of a den; a few of the women of the people, in other countries nature's masterpieces, here hideous and disgusting, concealing skinny bodies beneath stinking rags and showing hanging breasts through the rents in their clothing; yellow and sickly children, covered with sores and eaten by flies; an insupportable odour resulting from the dirtiness of the dwellings, the stirring up of the dust, and the frying in bad oil in the unventilated bazaars. After this stroll, go into the house you are living in: you will find no comfortable arrangement of rooms and no room pleasant to be in. Flies and gnats and a thousand insects are waiting to take possession of you during the night. Wringing wet with perspiration, exhausted with fatigue, you pass the time of repose in martyrdom to rashes and itching. You get up fit for nothing, swollen-eyed, exhausted, with a



nasty taste in the mouth and spots or rather ulcers all over the body, to face a day that will be a repetition of the one before.' This picture of the delights of Cairo is dated 29 Thermidor, year VI—in the summer heat, which might well help to produce the depression these lines reveal.

The trouble produced demands for repatriation, on pretexts of ill-health which the military medical officers were too ready, in Bonaparte's opinion, to recognize as well-founded. It had to be ended. He requested the Faculty to show less complaisance, and appealed to the sense of honour of the candidates for evacuation while affecting to throw open the gates for their return home. In a letter to Berthier, published by the *Courrier de l'Egypte*, he wrote : ' It is not my intention to retain with the army men who are not sensible of the honour of being our companions at arms. Let them go ! I will facilitate their departure. But I do not want them to mask beneath pretended sickness the real reason why they are unwilling to share our fatigues and perils : we should run the risk of their sharing our glory.' The physicians' turn of the screw and Bonaparte's crack of the whip produced their effect : the men afflicted with *cafard* endured their troubles in silence.

But if he had been content with that the cure would have been incomplete. Bonaparte recognized that something more needed to be done ; and his subordinates, down to the last rank, recognized it also. Soon officers and men and civilians with the army reacted against their depression by exerting themselves to counteract its causes as far as possible. They began to adapt their station to the needs of its garrison. There began then to appear in Cairo French signboards announcing cafés installed in the European style and provided with billiard rooms, and restaurants serving meals prepared *à la française*. Joiners' and cabinet makers' shops were set up in the city, providing beds, cupboards, commodes and chairs ; tailors' and braiders', enabling military uniforms and civilian clothes to be renewed ; hat shops in which customers could replace the ponderous headgear with which they went out beneath

the Egyptian sun, and bootshops, saddlers' shops, and harness makers' shops, where they could procure boots, swordbelts, and saddles in the European style. Under the direction of soldiers or employees of the army who were able to train cabinet makers, braiders, tailors, hatmakers, bootmakers, or saddlers, clever native artisans, of whom Cairo was full, were shown how to produce the articles required by the French. It was, no doubt, a great exaggeration to claim, as was done, that in three months the French army had 'changed the aspect of this country, so new to civilization,' and that 'it would not be the army's fault if Cairo did not become a second Paris.' But these exaggerations reveal the contrast between the little bits of France that had arisen here and there in Cairo and the great oriental city in which they were virtually submerged.

Bonaparte encouraged this beginning of the 'Frenchification' of Cairo, and helped its growth and its extension to less easily realizable innovations. Thanks to his support there came into existence a brewery for making beer without hops, to a formula supplied by the chemists of the Institute of Egypt; a liqueur and syrup distillery; bake-ovens; ■ French tobacco factory, to enable the trooper to pick up his pipe once more—he had soon tired of the narghile and the chibouk; and French baths, to obviate recourse to the Turkish baths, which the natives resented. The *Courrier de l'Egypte* lent its assistance by accepting advertisements from these establishments.<sup>1</sup> In Bonaparte's eyes

<sup>1</sup> Here are some of the advertisements published by the *Courrier de l'Egypte*: 'At the end of the Rue Venitienne, at the house of citizen Wolmar, physician, there is a factory for fine syrups and liqueurs of every sort, rum, brandy, and many other goods in the European style.' 'Factory for all sorts of liqueurs and syrups of citizens Faure, Nazo & Co., Place Birket el Fil, near hospital no. 2. Everything at fair prices.' 'French baths, firm of Radhewan Kâchef, Malafar quarter, residence of the commandant of the first section, at the back of Place Birket el Fil.' 'French manufacture of tobacco of all sorts, firm of Meemet Kâchef, Rue Petit-Thouars, opposite the Milanese restaurant.' 'The French hatmakers inform their fellow-citizens that they carry on their hat factory behind the office of the letter post.' 'Fine map makers, at the army printing press, French quarter.' 'Within the French quarter at Cairo, Faure, Guichard & Co have a factory and store for all sorts of liqueurs, syrups, foreign brandy, wine, coffee, sugar, perfumery, etc.'

they were means of improving the material condition of officer and soldier.

Their employment was in consonance with his efforts for combating depression in the army. Regimental bands, reorganized in the corps, were to play every day at noon in front of the hospitals (it was now winter). Every effort to provide distraction for the exiles, whether the idea was his own or anyone else's, received the support of the general-in-chief—the concerts (also advertised in the *Courrier de l'Egypte*) organized by Villoteau and Rigel, the amateur theatricals to which Balzac, Rigel, Ripault, Rigo, and Redouté devoted their leisure, and so on. Bonaparte would have liked to have professional actors. He asked the Directory for 'a troupe of comedians,' and at the same time 'a troupe of ballet dancers, marionette showmen for the people (at least three or four), a hundred Frenchwomen, the wives of all those who are employed in the country, some wine merchants and some distillers.' This list called for strange reinforcements; the expedition had to do without them. It received neither barnstormers, male or female, nor *corps de ballet*, nor Grand Guignol for the Arabs, nor ladies of easy virtue, nor legitimate spouses, nor specialists of the drinking-bar and the alembic. The list remains a bright example of what happened when the command concerned itself with small details.

The *Courrier de l'Egypte* published in a good position the prospectus of a 'Tivoli' organized by Dargevel, an ex-lifeguardsman and former fellow-student of Bonaparte's at Brienne; he was given the palace of a fugitive Mameluke, near the Ezbekieh, for the installation of refreshment rooms, dancing and gaming and reading rooms, and, in a garden shaded by lemon and orange trees, swings, bandstands, Argand lamps, and Chinese lanterns. The inauguration of this palace of delights was honoured by the presence of the general-in-chief. It marked an epoch in the very brief gay side of the Egyptian campaign.

It was there that Bonaparte met Mme. Fourès, wife of a lieutenant of light cavalry. She took his fancy; he

made her his mistress and sent her husband on a mission to Paris. The soldiers nicknamed her Cleopatra. The hero consoled himself by this liaison for the infidelities his brothers' letters alleged against Joséphine. Many other women went to Egypt with a husband, a lover, or several. The only ones of whom the chroniclers have mentioned the names are the courageous and good-hearted *Générale* Verdier and that Mme. Tempié who presented herself in these terms: ‘My husband, *lieutenant de vaisseau* Tempié, is in command of the *Amour*, partially armed, with thirty-six gun-ports and a copper bottom.’ The others, those who have fallen into oblivion, were more numerous. For the feminine effectives of the expedition were estimated by the author of the *Tableau de l’Egypte*<sup>1</sup> to number about 300 during the French occupation. ‘With a few exceptions,’ he adds, ‘they are pretty ugly.’ But as there were only 300 women to 40,000 men, ‘it is sufficient to wear a bonnet to receive attentions.’ Many martial idylls must have begun, like that of the future Caesar with his Cleopatra, in the groves of Tivoli.

‘It may,’ thought Dargevel of his establishment, ‘be a means of attracting the inhabitants of the country and their wives to our gatherings, and of inducing them gradually to adopt French habits, tastes, and fashions.’ It was an illusion that seems comic in our day, but one which the ex-lifeguardsman, who was a poor authority on the subject, was not the only one to entertain. More than one of his companions in the expedition hoped like him that in the long run the habits of the West would tempt the Egyptians to renounce for them the traditions of the East. They little realized the rigidity of the mould in which Eastern communities are cast. It would have required more than the seductions of a casino to open the doors of the harems and lower the veils of the Mussulman women.

Bonaparte asked less. But he was nevertheless one of those who did not despair of seeing the natives slowly change through contact with European society. Just before

<sup>1</sup> The orientalist Galland, then employed at the Imprimerie Nationale at Cairo, under Marcel.

leaving Egypt, he wrote in his instructions to his successor, Kléber : ' I have already asked several times for ■ troupe of comedians. I will make a special point of sending you one. This item is of great importance for the army and as the means of beginning to change the customs of the country.' This was expecting a great deal from the dramatic art ; the means was indeed disproportionate to the end. Other means served alike to improve the moral of the army and to strike the imagination of the people. There were fine military parades, like the review of the Bon division before the journey to Suez ; the commemoration of a victory gained in Europe, that of Rivoli ; and the ascents of fire-balloons, then a new thing. One of these had been launched at Cairo on 10 Frimaire (November 30th) under Conté's supervision. This attraction was repeated on 25 Nivôse (January 14th) for the anniversary of Rivoli. This time again there was panic among the front rows of watchers ; on the other hand, Mussulmans could be seen crossing the Ezbekieh square during the flight of the balloon without looking up at it, so indifferent were they to the spectacle which it had been supposed they would regard as a prodigy. The best informed among them had already been saying that the Montgolfière was not a means of transport but ' a sort of kite.' They had also observed that when it fell to earth its car threw out proclamations. ' There ! ' they said in malice, ' that is all it is for ! ' In any case they were well aware that these infidel French, through their dealings with Satan, were fertile in inventions. The first experiment in aerial navigation made over Egypt attracted their curiosity but not their admiration.

It was the privilege of the capital to witness and to benefit from all these innovations, some of them important. But the French occupation set its seal wherever it extended, and it extended then almost throughout Egypt. Wherever soldiers erected redoubts or forts, they exerted themselves to diminish their privations by improvising some replica of their normal environment. Everywhere they did something to re-fashion the places in which they were stationed, in order to meet their tastes and habits. Under the direction

of Kléber and afterwards of Marmont, the engineer Crétin dotted the rare hillocks in the flat country round Alexandria with defence works. The last survivor of these works, later baptized anachronistically Fort Napoleon, disappeared only recently. The French had found Alexandria in a state of decay that had surprised them ; during the occupation it began to revive, in spite of the stoppage of maritime commerce ; its seaborne trade might have brought it prosperity under the Turks and the Mamelukes, but the city had vegetated. The French occupation gave it the first stimulus it received up to the decisive one Mehemet Ali gave it. The ‘ Frank ’ quarter, that is to say, the European one, in which the consuls, the few people under their jurisdiction, and the Levantine Christians had been grouped, became a French quarter, animated by the activity of Headquarters, which was installed in the house of the French consul, and of the various departments that provided for the needs of the garrison, the fortress, the fleet, the port, the quarantine station, and the province. There, as at Cairo, a few Western usages were imported, producing a few material changes necessary for safety and health ; a few touches of French colour were superposed on the exotic setting of Arab and Levantine life.

The same thing occurred at Syene, at the opposite extremity of the country, where the installation of the French has been described by Vivant-Denon in an exquisite page : ‘ We spent our first moments,’ he writes, ‘ settling in. We had fairly good quarters—Kiachef’s house. . . . We made beds, tables, benches. . . . On the second day of our establishment at Syene there were already French tailors, bootmakers, and goldsmiths in the streets, barbers with their signs, eating-houses, and *table d’hôte* restaurants. An army station offers a picture of the most rapid development of industrial resources ; each individual sets all his energies to work for the good of the community. But the thing that characterises French armies is that the superfluous is established at the same time and with the same care as the necessary. At Syene there were gardens, cafés, and public gaming tables using locally made cards.

At the end of the village a straight avenue of trees led northward ; the soldiers put up a military column with the inscription : ' Road no. 1,167,340 from Paris.' It was a few days after receiving a supply of dates as their whole ration that they had these humorous, philosophical ideas. Death alone can interfere with such bravery and gaiety : the worst misfortune can do nothing against it.'

Thus a current of French life spread from one end of Egypt to the other. Winter helped the worst detractors of the country to think better of it. The same officer, Detroye, who in Thermidor described Cairo as ■ hell, agreed in Pluviôse that ' the lot of the French has improved with the climate,' that many of the discomforts which had made him hate Egypt had disappeared, and that ' each of us has found resources and created new habits ; the quarters are arranged in the European fashion.' The only repugnant elements left were ' this dirty and bearded populace and these phantoms called women.' From the population, however, if not from the populace, other Frenchmen borrowed some of its oriental customs : ' We went to bathe,' reports one of them, the *commissaire des guerres* Miot, ' and found endless pleasure in this new way of purifying ourselves . . . We took to the pipe (*chibouk*) . . . Often we smoked eagle-wood with our tobacco, and its perfume mingled very pleasantly with the smoke. We drew it into our mouths through long tubes. . . . We had coffee at every meal. We had almost forgotten the use of chairs, and lived stretched out on divans placed round our rooms. . . . We exchanged our narrow breeches for wider trousers.' Thus some Egyptian usages spread among the occupying forces, who introduced in turn their own customs into Egypt ; and in this way there began, through very small matters, that exchange of habits and social rapprochement to which Bonaparte had looked forward.

In the adaptation of the country to the needs of its defence and to the conditions of life of its conquerors, by the introduction of new practices and customs, and by the beginnings of ' Gallicization ' of the garrison

centres, Western civilization accentuated its contact with the native community and began to imprint its own character upon Islamic Egypt. To which element, then, might the Mussulman Egyptians be the more sensitive, the disturbance and annoyance they suffered from regulations and innovations, or the improvements at which these aimed? In nine cases out of ten they had no common measure with the French of the idea of improvement. On the whole the things which in their eyes set bad examples outnumbered those which they recognized as useful ones—all the more since, in order to be recognized as useful, an innovation had first to be perceived and understood, a thing that as yet was possible only for the small minority of educated natives.

'The great majority of these people are drawn to folly and pleasure,' wrote an Arab chronicler of the French; though he went so far as to recognize their superiority in technical capacity. The majority of his co-religionists may not have had the capacity to sum up the French in this way; but for all of them there was a stigma of impiety, under the law of Mahomet, attaching to the intrusion of these Infidels into a country of Islam and into the existence of followers of the Prophet. The French counted on influencing the natives through the material benefits of the civilization they introduced: 'These improvements introduced through conquest, these arts naturalized as by enchantment are bound in the long run to make an impression on the most prejudiced of them.' The French noted with satisfaction that 'the Egyptians are beginning to appreciate the industrial benefits brought in by European civilization.' In reality the immense majority of the Egyptians took no heed of this civilization, because they did not yet feel the needs which it satisfied. The offer of progress had come before the demand for it existed.

The thing of which the Egyptians of 1799 showed the most appreciation, even admiration, was the activity of the French leaders, especially that of the greatest leader of all. These generals, and this army commander, who had sheathed the sword and yet did not take their ease,



did not live in indolent seclusion, did not pass on the tasks of administration to some 'scribe,' but themselves took endless pains, plunged into all sorts of occupations, did not spare themselves, were present everywhere, living the life of the soldier—they offered so great a contrast with the Turkish pashas and even the Mameluke beys that the natives were astounded. The tale went from mouth to mouth that 'Bonaparte, during his journey to Suez, went on horseback day and night along the seashore, without cook or bed or tent, and lived on three roast fowls wrapped in paper.' 'Sultan Kebir' and his *kiayas* and *viziers* clearly belonged to a different type from that of the oriental personages who had lorded it over them in the past—this was the thing that most impressed the Egyptian people as a whole.

The insurrection at Cairo had compelled Bonaparte to modify his native policy, but not to reverse it. He soon returned unreservedly to it, because there was no possible alternative. He could not go back on the practice of his policy of association with the native and of treating the Mussulman with consideration, unless he was to increase his difficulties, complicate his task and that of his subordinates, and add to the perils surrounding French rule; though he was ready at any moment, if necessary, to combine his policy with more vigilance and more severity than before. It was thus to his interest to get back quickly on to good terms with the natives—that is to say, of course, with those of the natives who had submitted—to give them pledges of his protection, and to call on their services.

Once a month at Cairo, in the quarter adjoining the mosque of the sheik Hussein, there were celebrations in memory of the sheik. The celebrations had been interrupted since the arrival of the French. This was not what Bonaparte wanted. On his order the festival was observed as in the time of the Mamelukes and of the Turks. The beginning of Ramadan, the appearance in the sky of the faint crescent of the moon which marks the opening of that month of daily fasting and nightly feasting, was tradi-

tionally the occasion of a great religious and popular festival. Bonaparte wanted this to go on as usual, not only at Cairo but all over Egypt. This Mussulman festival was in fact observed, and with more splendour than ever. The general-in-chief associated himself with it, by the same right as his Mussulman predecessors in the government of the country. He received the visit of the picturesque procession which the aga of the janissaries led through the city, escorted by French horsemen ; and he gravely listened to the announcement that the new moon had been seen. On this occasion the military authorities and general staff officers banqueted with the ulema and sheiks. Thus there had been no relaxation of the principle that the religious life of the Mussulmans should continue its habitual rhythm, abandoning none of its usages or external manifestations.

The troops had been reminded of the necessity for protecting themselves against the natives ; and this may for the moment have obscured the need for protecting the natives from annoyance by the troops. Bonaparte soon re-established equilibrium between the two duties ; and he did so with a precipitancy and a rigour that probably led him into injustice toward his own people. Native women had been murdered, and as a result three soldiers, probably innocent, were condemned to death and executed. Bonaparte issued orders for the punishment of acts of pillage of which soldiers had been guilty, not only against Arabs in pursuit of whom columns had been detached, but occasionally against convoys and caravans. There was no relaxation in his efforts to enforce respect for the safety, the property, and the honour of those natives who had submitted.

The *rayas*, the eastern Christians, feeling protected by the presence of a European army, had put off the humility which they had been compelled to assume under the domination of the Mussulmans. They had taken liberties with certain prohibitions imposed on them, such as that of riding on horseback, wearing white turbans, and so on. These breaches of age-long customs had quickly brought down on them accusations of insolence

and arrogance. Bonaparte was aware that he had brought the *rayas*, by virtue of his bayonets, a security they had never before enjoyed ; but he was not prepared to allow them to carry trifles of *amour propre* to lengths that aroused quarrels with the Mussulmans and exposed him to the charge of showing partiality as against the Mussulmans. By his order they resumed 'their ordinary costume, with the black and white turban,' and ceased to decorate themselves with 'palm-leaf shawls' and to form processions. They were forbidden to drink, eat, or smoke in the streets during Ramadan, 'lest they irritate the Mussulmans.' Thus, to please the Mussulmans, Bonaparte was not above condescending to such trivial matters as the 'headgear paragraph,' or doing violence to the republican principle of equality.

The *rayas* were able to take revenge for the humiliations they had suffered by enlisting in the ranks of the French army—in the Levantine mounted corps commanded by Bartholomew the Greek, in the 'Greek companies' constituted after the Cairo insurrection, in the 'Maltese legion' of which the nucleus was formed by men of that island, themselves semi-African, or in the 'dromedary regiment' (to-day they would be called meharists) organized for meeting the Arabs with their own mount. This regiment was endowed by Bonaparte with oriental garb, turban and burnous, which was later embellished by Kléber.<sup>1</sup> But the recruiting of Levantine Christians and the excesses committed by some of them—above all Bartholomew, who abused his rank by brutalities toward the native Mussulmans—were liable to damage Bonaparte, as he discovered. He therefore made no great effort to recruit military auxiliaries in Egypt among the Christians ; and they in their turn were not at all reluctant to be passed over, for they were never anxious for enrolment. The few he employed were balanced, if the phrase may be permitted, by the janissaries of Omar Aga's 'Turkish company,' by the young Mamelukes conscripted into the French army, and by some deserters from the beys' camp. Thus, these small-scale incorporations

<sup>1</sup> The 'Coptic Legion' was created under Kléber's governorship.



GENERAL DESAIX

*By Dutertre. Versailles Museum*



of inhabitants of the country, Christian or Mussulman, began a cautious fusion of the varied elements of the Egyptian population in the military melting pot, a utensil for which they had no great liking. Bonaparte looked forward to this fusion; the constitution of a national army, the formation of an Egyptian nationality, the awakening or re-awakening of an Arab patriotism formed part of his dreams, if not of his plans. But he quickly realized that the Egyptian was not as a rule drawn toward the profession of arms. Moreover, he was not primarily interested in forming a really native military force; what he wanted was a Soudanese, black army, composed of Nubian recruits, of the negroes whom the caravaneers of Darfur, Sennaar, and Kordofan brought to Cairo to sell as slaves. This far-seeing plan of Bonaparte's was a distant precursor of the idea of the 'black army,' of 'coloured troops.' When Mehemet Ali set out to form an army of his own and began by recruiting Soudanese negroes, he did no more than carry out a project of which the paternity belonged to Bonaparte.

The leader's ideas on this subject were shared even more strongly by the lieutenant of whom he thought most—Desaix. In Desaix's papers there was found a note in which he suggested, no doubt for Kléber's information, a system of recruitment of Mamelukes, natives, and negroes. He proposed to gather together all the young Mamelukes scattered, to the number of some 2,000, in the villages of Egypt ('they would form,' he said, 'a very excellent body of recruits for the army, wherever it might be, in France or in Egypt'); to mix these young Mamelukes with French youths, particularly ships' boys, and to give the whole of them military instruction with a view to their incorporation in the cavalry; to recruit negroes ('we should have,' wrote Desaix, 'as far as possible all those who come to Egypt, big and small; the adults should be enrolled in the corps and the young ones sent to a French school, where they will be taught our customs and our language'); finally, to recruit all the Arab boys whose fathers had perished during the capture of villages that

had revolted, 'to take them to Cairo, put them to school, and teach them to read and write the two languages and to dress in our style.' Desaix calculated that if this had been done at once there would have been created ■ nursery of young soldiers, comprising 2,000 Mamelukes, 2,000 negroes, and 2,000 native Arabs. But nothing of the sort was attempted either at once or later.

For the moment the civil domain, that of the administration, was the only one in which general recourse to the services of the native, Mussulman or Christian, was possible. The gap which the suppression of the Cairo Municipal Divan and the General Divan had created in the policy of association with the Egyptians had rapidly proved the desirability of returning to that policy. Bonaparte returned to it the moment he was able to. In December 1798 he re-established both divans; the General Divan of Egypt was to be composed of sixty members and to appoint from their number the fourteen members of a small permanent Divan, meeting every day in Cairo. The fourteen members of this small Divan were five great sheiks and three merchants, in all eight Mussulmans; two Copts, two Syrians, and two European business men, making six Christians. All were given salaries of fixed amount. Their council had its secretaries and interpreters. The Command was represented at their meetings by ■ French commissioner, Gloutier, member of the Institute of Egypt. A proclamation issued by Bonaparte on 1 Nivôse, year VII (December 21st, 1798), announced to the Egyptians the reconstitution of these assemblies. 'I was angry with you,' he said, 'because of your revolt, and have deprived you of your Divan for two months; but to-day I am restoring it to you. Your good conduct has wiped out the stain of your revolt.' The penance was ended. Then, after having given the step he had taken the significance of ■ reward, Bonaparte gave to his own arrival in Egypt the significance of the will of Providence. 'Sherifs, ulema, orators of the mosques, . . . make it known to the people that since the world was made it has been written that, after having destroyed the enemies of Islamism and torn down their crosses, I should

come to the end of the West to fulfil the task imposed on me.'

It was a rather audacious assertion to try to impose on the Faithful to whom it was addressed, even with its allusion to a familiar prediction. One of them declares that he saw nothing in it but 'a transparent ruse.' Bonaparte no doubt thought he could make it seem worthy of credit by talking once more of the impiety of his troops as Christians and of their harshness against 'the cross,' symbolized by the papacy and the Order of Malta. But, failing apostasy, for which neither the army nor its leader was prepared, impiety towards his own religion does not absolve a non-Mussulman in the eyes of a Mussulman; the effect of this language could not, therefore, be salutary. What could be was the re-establishment of the native representative organs, for which the local population had a high regard, and the mission once more assigned to them. The small Divan emanating from the large one was 'to occupy itself continuously with all questions relative to justice, to the happiness of the inhabitants, to the interests of the French Republic, and to good relations on all sides.' It acted as municipal Divan of Cairo, as well as permanent commission for the country.

The first task of the resuscitated Divan was to address, at Bonaparte's instance, a proclamation to the inhabitants of Cairo. For its resurrection it praised the 'foresight, solicitude, and compassion' of the general-in-chief; it notified the repression of excesses imputed to the soldiers of the army and the punishment of thefts committed by Christians; it gave the assurance that Bonaparte intended 'to destroy all abuses,' announced that he wished to cut a canal from the Nile to Suez to improve trade between India and Egypt, and declared (a thing that would interest the natives more than the promised Suez Canal) that 'in this Divan the weak will find a bulwark against the strong.'

The new Divan was no more a tribunal than its predecessor had been, and the organization of justice accordingly remained unaffected. An order of Bonaparte's confirmed the competence of the Grand Cadi and the cadis subordinate



to him in regard to crimes and offences committed by natives to the detriment of natives. There was only one reservation : leave was granted to provincial commandants to supersede the *cadi* by a commission of three French officers if public safety was endangered or if circumstances required that step to be taken. But in this exceptional case no death sentence could be carried out without the approval of the general-in-chief.

At no time did Bonaparte make any fundamental change in the administration of justice or in penal legislation in Egypt. After his departure Desaix referred to this omission as a defect in his civil work. 'Victory over the vanquished will bring their submission,' he wrote to Kléber ; 'but only a good and exact system of justice permanently in operation will enable you to have enough influence over individuals to make them obey your will. I should be inclined to begin by giving the fullest attention to a well-established system of police and justice.' Desaix sketched ■ plan of judicial reform, including the creation of a post of administrator general of justice for the whole of Egypt, the setting up in each province of police administrators, and the promulgation in Arabic of a very simple penal code, applicable to the commonest crimes and offences. These ideas certainly do honour to the general, who had deservedly won in Upper Egypt the nickname of Sultan Just. But it was impossible for Bonaparte to reform in a single year all that needed reform ; and it may be that his instinct had served him well in warning him of the danger of interfering too soon, however good his intentions, with the native institution which was most imbued with the Mussulman spirit. Even enlightened natives would unfailingly have taken alarm at any fundamental change in their judicial system and their legislation.

Bonaparte placed trust once more in these natives, enlisting or re-enlisting their collaboration. Several of them had not ceased to deserve his trust. He valued their services—he had proved their value. On transferring the command in Cairo to General Dugua before setting out for Syria, he wrote to him, on 21 Pluviôse, year VII (February 9th,

1799): 'The Cairo Divan has real influence in the city and is composed of well-intentioned men. It must be treated with great respect.' He went on to mention as deserving of 'particular confidence,' and as serviceable sources of information on popular feeling, two members of the Divan, the doyen of the Damascene merchants and the Copt intendant general, and then gave this instruction to Dugua: 'If there should be disturbances in the city, you should address yourself to the smaller Divan, or even reassemble the General Divan. They will succeed in conciliating everybody if confidence is shown in them.' This confidence was at all times, as we shall see, accompanied and corrected by the spirit of precaution. For all that, it was the necessary postulate of the system of government which had been restored, a system in which, as in the past, association could not be a mere façade but, provided that the native played his part, must be a reality.

On the eve of his departure for Syria, Bonaparte reassembled the Cairo Divan, augmented for the occasion by the principal sheiks and by the officers of the janissaries. He announced his departure to them, said that he would be absent for a month, explained the purpose of his expedition in such a way as to show them Egypt's interest in it, requested them to maintain order and tranquillity in the city, and asked them to give similar directions to the local officers. He was given a promise that all this should be done. A proclamation from the Divan to this effect was posted in the streets.

Bonaparte was no less concerned for his influence over the nomads than for his ascendancy over the settled population. Certain Bedouin tribes had come spontaneously to render submission, those, for instance, of the Arabs of Tor, in the Sinai peninsula. Bonaparte gave audience to their chiefs, held palaver and treated with them, agreed with them as to the services they should render him, and granted them guarantees. Other tribes, in more direct contact with the Nile valley and Delta, had made their submission after being pursued and run to earth, or in order to avoid that. It was not possible for the

influence of the government to be exercised over this mobile and fluid mass by the same instruments as over the people of the towns and villages ; the divans had here no means of acting. Bonaparte created a native intermediary between the nomads and himself in the person of a kiaya of the Arabs, Mohammed Aga Ben el Rahman, to whom he granted an official residence and a salary. The kiaya of the Arabs was to have knowledge of all the tribes still warring against the Republic, and to be kept informed and to keep the command-in-chief informed of their movements, so as to be able to bring them to submission. All the tribes that had already submitted were to send representatives to attend on him, and these would recognize him as their head and swear fidelity to the Republic. Finally, he was to see that the Arabs charged with the guarding of the routes kept them properly policed. Thus in the case also of the nomads Bonaparte wished his action to be carried out through a man of their race. This did not mean that he left matters entirely in this man's hands. In his instructions to Dugua he enumerated the five tribes of the province of Cairo, three of which had submitted and the other two had not ; and indicated the attitude Dugua should adopt toward the latter.

Even the expedition on which he was about to proceed was used by Bonaparte as a pretext for manifesting his good relations with the Egyptian population. In order to associate them with his enterprise in Syria, he decided to have with him the ex-kiaya of the pasha, on whom he had conferred the dignity of Emir Hadji. The Emir Hadji would be joined by ' the sheiks of the four principal sects ' and the mullah, ' the man,' said Bonaparte, ' who is the most revered in the Mussulman empire after the mufti of Constantinople.' This group of Mussulman personages was to be escorted by Omar's Turkish company. But neither the janissaries of the escort nor the dignitaries they escorted had much taste for the general-in-chief's military excursion ; and the two principal personages only reluctantly put in an appearance when it started. Their selection, however, shows Bonaparte's intention of

practising abroad the association he pursued at home with the Mussulmans of Egypt.

This Mussulman policy did not exclude solicitude for the non-Mussulman elements ; nor did it exclude rigour toward the Mussulmans when called for, or precautions against them. Bonaparte was the first governor of Egypt to regulate the position of the Jewish community of Cairo, through a decree organizing it or sanctioning the organization it had given itself. After the Israelite consistory, an Orthodox convent found his support. He conferred important privileges on the Greek monks of Mount Sinai—exemption from taxation, from Customs duties, and from prohibitions of every sort ; government protection for them and for their religion ; confirmation of their ownership of their properties ; and a guarantee of their freedom from all ecclesiastical authority other than that of their archimandrite. The Copts, in spite of Bonaparte's reproaches of their cupidity, remained his collaborators in the financial administration, and his employment of them guaranteed their community against violence at the hands of Mahometan fanaticism. Bonaparte had a high opinion of the highest-placed of the Copts, the intendant general Guerguès Goary. One of them, Moallem Jacob, accompanied Desaix in Upper Egypt ; Desaix never let him out of his sight, and had nothing but praise for him. Finally, though Bonaparte took credit with the Mussulmans for having 'torn down the crosses,' the Franciscans of the Holy Land at Cairo and Alexandria had never had less ground for apprehension in regard to their convents, churches, and missions than since he had held power in Egypt. Thus, there was no persecution of Jews and Christians to please the Mussulmans.

Nor was there any weakness in regard to Mussulmans who had not made their submission. The executions at Cairo did not come entirely to an end with the period immediately following the insurrection. A Mussulman chronicler writes of ninety persons shot on a single day in the Citadel. The figure seems an exaggeration ; but it is certain that natives who were held to have been guilty of conspiracy or of relations with the Turks or the Mame-

lukes, and who returned to the capital and hid there, were executed. One of Bonaparte's officers tells of having seen heads exposed and carried about on pikes; he adds that the spectacle created very little sensation in Cairo. In the provinces the generals followed their chief's example, striking hard on occasion and showing no mercy toward disaffection and perfidy. In Upper Egypt, where instances of actual native resistance to the conquest were rare, the repression was rigorous when it came: bands of peasants or Arabs who revolted at the instigation of the Mamelukes were cut to pieces by Davout, who estimated their losses at three hundred and completed their lesson by destroying a large village. The conquest of Egypt was no more of an idyll than that of Algeria. It was no idyll even in Upper Egypt, where it was best able to dispense with violence.

There was no relaxation in vigilance or in preventive measures. These precautions, redoubled at times, prevented the need for the repression of revolts from occurring. In his instructions to Dugua, Bonaparte laid down the steps he should take at the first sign of agitation—troops to be confined to barracks, guards reinforced, batteries to be placed at the approaches to the French quarter, and reinforcements brought in from the nearest garrison. These measures would save him from the necessity of having the city bombarded from the forts, a step to which he should resort only in the last extremity. Thus, Bonaparte's confidence in the loyalty and the influence of his native collaborators did not prevent him from remaining on the watch and desiring that his subordinates should do the same.

In order to influence this doubtfully submissive mass of Mussulmans, Bonaparte's policy had counted, under his original plan, on Islamic elements outside Egypt—the Sultan of Turkey, the pashas of Syria, the potentates of the Barbary regencies, and the sherif of Mecca. The expedition he undertook against Syria is evidence enough that the two first of these worked against him. As for the Barbary rulers, they did not reply to his letters, if they ever received them, and, a thing of which he was unaware, they were on the point of breaking off diplomatic relations

with France. The only one to reply to him was the sherif of Mecca, because the sherif's port of Jeddah had more to fear from the French, who were already installed at Suez and would soon be installed at Kosseir. Bonaparte wrote again to him, on 6 Pluviôse, year VII, encouraging him to assist the resumption of trade with Egypt by the Red Sea and guaranteeing a good reception for his ships and their cargoes.

But while soft words were arriving from the sherif, combatants were coming from his states. During the campaign in Upper Egypt, where Desaix, Davout, Belliard, and Donzelot, with their five thousand men, only exceptionally encountered resistance from the inhabitants but had to fight the Mamelukes, the latter were reinforced by bands of Arabs, who had come by the Red Sea from Jambo, Jeddah and Mecca in answer to Murad Bey's appeal. The 'Meccans,' as the French generals called them, more than once gave the little French division enough to do in conquering and pacifying the vast territory between Gizeh and Assouan. And, although these Meccans included a number of men from the Barbary states, enrolled in the Arab ports, they represented in the eyes of the population of Egypt the standard of the Prophet, raised in the Holy City against the infidel invader. Here again it was to the superiority of the French forces that the final elimination of this dangerous symbol was due. When the survivors of the Meccans were re-embarked for the opposite shore of the Red Sea and Kosseir was occupied, Belliard, imitating Bonaparte's example, himself wrote to the sherif of Mecca, promising him tranquillity and fresh supplies for his states and asking him for reciprocity in this.

This series of actions and incidents reveals the outlines of a policy resuming and continuing that which Bonaparte had followed before the insurrection at Cairo ; and it traced with precision the line of conduct to be followed by the generals and administrators to whom he left the watch over Egypt during his absence.

## XII

### *IN THE CHIEF'S ABSENCE*

FIFTEEN THOUSAND men left for Syria under Bonaparte ; five thousand were pursuing the conquest of Upper Egypt under the orders of Desaix ; there remained scarcely five thousand for the defence of the territory between Cairo and the sea and between the deserts of Sinai and Libya. The weaker the effectives left in the occupied and pacified part of Egypt, the more Bonaparte relied on his policy in order to retain the obedience of the Egyptian population.

One of the factors which, for good or evil, would have most influence on the attitude of the Egyptians was the success or failure of the campaign undertaken abroad by their master. Clearly Bonaparte could count on the moral effect in Egypt of victories in Syria ; but it was no less clear that he would have to reckon with the moral effect of defeats, if destiny held defeats in reserve for him—as, of course, she did. Thus the way he represented the events of his Syrian campaign to the Egyptians, through General Dugua and the Cairo Divan, constitutes a peculiar element in his political action in Egypt during his absence. To make much of his successes, to mask his reverses, and to give prominence to every act of clemency or moderation toward Mussulmans, and especially towards Egyptians met with on the way—these were the principal means employed by Bonaparte for putting the best complexion on the fate of his Syrian expedition.

When El Arish was captured, Bonaparte made sure that the very liberal terms of capitulation granted to the garrison should be attributed in Egypt to his spontaneous generosity. By order of Berthier, Andréossy sent the news to Dugua,

enumerated the resources found in the fort, and added : ' There was a garrison of fifteen hundred men. The breach was already practicable, and it was only out of humanity and in order to save these unfortunates that the *général en chef* accepted their capitulation.' Dugua made use of this information, and at his instance the ulema and the Cairo Divan addressed to the inhabitants a proclamation mentioning Bonaparte's generosity and concluding : ' So it is that the brave French behave to their enemies ! ' In reality there had been some infractions of the terms of capitulation ; but this fact was not mentioned.

There had been captured with the garrison some thirty Mamelukes, six of whom were of high rank, and a certain number of soldiers of Egyptian origin. These last were set free and allowed to return to their villages. The rest were sent to Dugua, who was to permit them to return to their homes and to submit them there to discreet surveillance, treating them well and giving them reason to hope for still better treatment if they behaved properly. They entered Cairo a little later, on donkeys, escorted by French troops ; to the general astonishment they were then set free.

Fifteen Turkish flags had been captured with the fortress ; Dugua was ordered to arrange with the sheik El Mohdi and the Cairo Divan for a ceremonial reception of these trophies and for their deposit in the mosque of El Azhar. This was done. The reception of the flags was made the occasion of a festival of which Dugua fixed the date so as to coincide with the ending of Ramadan. Cavalry and infantry escorted the trophies to El Azhar, where they were handed over to the sheik El Sherkawi, hoisted above the minarets of the mosque, and saluted by salvos of musketry and artillery. The minarets of El Azhar decorated by standards won by the French from Mussulmans ! To palliate the audacity of this act, the sheik El Sherkawi declaimed an address concocted by his confederate El Mohdi, praising the virtues of Bonaparte and his genius, inspired of God, and ' hinting to the people that sooner or later this extraordinary man would be converted to Islam, as the sole religion descended from heaven.' Such was the exploitation for Egyptian use of the



first victory won by Bonaparte, at the outset of his march against Syria.

There followed a second victory, the capture of Gaza. It was announced to the inhabitants of Egypt by a proclamation of the Cairo Divan, drawn up on the basis of a letter from Berthier to Dugua. According to this proclamation there had been no more than a skirmish, and the fort had been occupied without striking a blow ; in it were found ' stores of provisions, four hundred quintals of powder, twelve cannons, tents, and a complete outfit of war material.'

At the same time Bonaparte's proclamation to the inhabitants of Syria was communicated to Cairo and Alexandria, in order that the Egyptians might learn of the assurances given by the general-in-chief to the Syrians : ' No one shall be disturbed, and we shall respect your properties. Let the cadis continue their functions and the people continue to profess the Mussulman religion and to pray in the mosques.' Orders were issued for this document to be distributed not only in Egypt but throughout the Levant and Barbary.

Next came the capture of Jaffa—a contested and sanguinary victory, followed by the looting of the town and the mass execution of some 2,500 Turkish soldiers. The Egyptians found in the ranks of Djezzar's soldiers were excepted from the death sentence which was pronounced on the rest of the prisoners. Their number amounted to 300 according to Berthier, and 400 to 500 according to Bonaparte. In Berthier's phrase, they were ' returned to the bosom of their families.' Dugua was informed that they were being sent to him under escort, with the flags taken at Jaffa. The Cairo Divan did not fail to praise the clemency of this exception in the lengthy proclamation it addressed to the Egyptians : ' The general-in-chief, touched with compassion for the Egyptians who were at Jaffa, pardoned them and will send them back to their country, in the same way as the inhabitants of Damascus and Aleppo. This proceeding is a proof of his humanity and his generosity after victory.'

These bulletins of successive victories made an impression

on the Egyptian population. Abderrahman Gabarti may be believed when he writes : ' The inhabitants of Cairo were astonished at the rapidity of these successes ; a good many were unwilling to believe in them.'

Couriers arrived later from Syria by dromedary and announced that the army had taken Caiffa, that it was marching on Acre, and that it would be back in a week. This was the optimistic anticipation of soldiers before whom, up to then, nothing had been able to stand ; but the reality differed from it a good deal. A first assault on the fortifications of Acre failed. Berthier and Andréossy, in writing to Dugua, attenuated the news of the check, described the situation of the army as very satisfactory, and declared that there was ' abundance in the camps,' that the French had been welcomed as liberators, that provisions had been brought to them from Lebanon, and that they were receiving deputations from Syrians asking to be delivered from the yoke of Djezzar—assertions which were only partly true and which, in any case, did not alter the fact that Acre was offering resistance.

While the siege continued, the French had the opportunity of taking their revenge in the open field. Bonaparte took advantage of a convoy to send to Egypt prisoners and flags captured in the battles of Nazareth and of Mount Tabor, and natives of Cairo and Boulak also captured, together with Ibrahim Bey's baggage ; he also sent copies of the general orders announcing these two brilliant victories. Dugua, Poussielgue, and Fourier received letters from Bonaparte and Berthier asking them to announce the new successes to the Cairo Divan, adding that the invested fortress was on the point of falling and that the army would shortly be returning. The Divan issued another proclamation : three hundred men under Junot had beaten four thousand, most of them horsemen, killing six hundred and capturing five flags—from which it drew this conclusion, useful as a reminder to the inhabitants of a country so weakly guarded as Egypt : ' God disposes of victory according to His will, and it is not the number of combatants that determines it.'

But the prolongation of the siege of Acre became known through the arrival of wounded men evacuated from the camp, and this, and the news of some of the losses suffered, enabled it to be realized in Egypt that a shadow had fallen across the picture of the Syrian campaign. The rumour spread that Bonaparte had been killed. The Cairo Divan had to warn the people against 'the lies and seditious talk of hemp-eaters'—chewers or smokers of hashish. Dugua, in his letters to Bonaparte, made no secret of his anxiety to see him return.

In these conditions the raising of the siege of Acre was an event which necessarily had to be presented cautiously in Egypt. Bonaparte was careful in writing to Dugua; his euphemisms were not likely to deceive the general, but they dictated to him the language he was to use. Bonaparte wrote that the raising of the siege was the consequence of successes which made it unnecessary to persist in the attempt to achieve a result which had become of no importance: 'I have taken the principal points of the precincts of Acre. We did not consider it worth while to waste energies on the siege of the inner precincts.' He wrote in person on the same day to the Cairo Divan. He was about to leave, bringing many prisoners and flags; he had razed to the ground Djezzar's palace and the ramparts of Acre, and had bombarded the town, which was a heap of ruins; the inhabitants had evacuated it by sea; Djezzar was severely wounded; the enemy ships had been destroyed; he himself would be leaving at once for Cairo, where, in spite of the zeal of the Divan, evilly disposed persons were trying to disturb the public tranquillity; but all that would disappear on his return like clouds before the first rays of the sun. So did Bonaparte announce to the Cairo Divan his decision to give up the attempt to capture Acre and to bring his army back to Egypt.

His correspondents were not duped by this fanciful account, concocted for their benefit. One of them, Abderrahman Gabarti, who was acquainted with the letter, was none the less well aware of the truth about the failure of the siege of Acre and the reasons for which it was raised.

He complacently enumerates fifteen of them, and assembles them in an apocryphal letter which he attributes to Bonaparte, who, he states, sent two communications to the Cairo Divan, one for publication, with the official version of events, and the other, secret, containing the truth. This second letter had no existence, but its contents represent what well-informed natives had learnt.

The return to headquarters of an army which had failed to attain all its objectives, had turned back after a repulse, had been thinned by enemy fire and by plague, and had suffered endless fatigues and privations, ran the risk of giving the lie to the news of unreserved success which had been spread; and the quarters to which it was returning were a country only just conquered and still of doubtful submission. This was one more reason for making sure that the return should have all the air of triumph. Bonaparte arranged the programme with minute care. Adjutant General Boyer, who was being sent on in advance with a detachment and some of the wounded, was to take with him the captured Turkish flags, and to display them as trophies in every village he passed through. On reaching Saleyeh, on the eastern border of Egypt, if he learned that order reigned in Cairo he was to pass the flags to General Lannes, who would march to the capital with a battalion. Boyer was to write from Katieh to General Alméras, commanding at Damietta, that the Turkish troops concentrated at Cyprus had been beaten in Syria and that sixty flags had been taken from them. He was to take with him Abdullah Aga, the commandant of Jaffa, and sixteen of the principal Turkish officers of that city. He was to treat them as captives, to have them confined in the citadel at Cairo, and to announce that there were many others. In short, 'he will write, say, and do everything that can give him a triumphal entry.' The litters bearing wounded generals and superior officers were to enter Cairo each on a different day.

Dugua himself was to have no doubt as to the brilliant situation of the army. It had 'left Acre,' Berthier reported to him, 'after giving Djezzar a good drubbing'; its march

to Egypt was proceeding 'in the utmost tranquillity'; it was in very good condition, full of enthusiasm; it was bringing twenty flags and five hundred Turkish prisoners. The troops were halting at Saleyeh for rest and reorganization, and would make their way from there to Cairo by short marches, in good order, with bands playing as they passed through villages. Dugua was instructed in advance by Bonaparte himself as to the ceremonial with which the army was to be received at Cairo; he was to come out to Matarieh to meet it, with all the troops in the capital except those needed for guarding the forts; with the Divan, the chief personages of the city, 'every possible bandsman,' and the captured flags, which were to be carried by men on horseback; the two armies would meet in battle formation, and would then enter Cairo together. Palm branches were to be attached to flags, caps, and helmets. No effort was to be spared to heighten the effect of the entry of the army and to strike the imagination of the people.

All this was done. Bonaparte, his generals, and his soldiers were received in triumph as they entered Cairo by the Victory Gate, Bab en Nasr. The ground was strewn with palms thrown beneath the feet of their mounts. The great of Cairo crowded forward to meet them, bringing them presents<sup>1</sup>; some brought horses with splendid trappings, some camels, some arms and caparisons. An immense crowd<sup>2</sup> of spectators was massed along their route, curious to see what these Frenchmen looked like on their return, after rumour had said that they had been exterminated beneath the walls of Acre. Salvos of artillery welcomed Bonaparte to his Ezbekieh palace. Then, for

<sup>1</sup> The Sheik ■ Bekri, among others, brought Bonaparte a superb black horse covered with a very luxurious horse-cloth, and led by the Mameluke Roustan; it was this Roustan who accompanied Napoleon in all his campaigns.

<sup>2</sup> Costaz, who compiled the account of the army's return in the *Courrier de l'Egypte*, wrote: '■ was a strange spectacle to see this immense crowd of men sitting on their heels, and wearing on their motionless heads many-coloured turbans. Entertainments of all sorts, such as rope-dancing, cudgel fights, and feats of skill, were given for three days in the Ezbekieh square by the people of the country.'

three days, there were rejoicings in Cairo—dancing, jugglers' shows, swings, and, at night, illuminations and fireworks.

When he met the sheiks, ulema, and other personages of Cairo at Matarieh, Bonaparte asked them ironically to make sure that he was really alive: 'Am I dead or full of life? Tell the scaremongers not to nurse vain hopes; assure them that Bonaparte has come back in good health and loaded with spoils.' The Divan complied with his wish and issued a proclamation announcing to the people the return of their general-in-chief, 'the friend of the Mussulmans': 'He arrived by the Nasr gate with a magnificent procession. . . . All the inhabitants, who rushed to meet him, recognized him. It is clear that lies had been spread about him. Mamelukes and Arabs spread these lies in order to lead Mussulmans and *rayas* to death and to bring about the complete ruin of Egypt.' Bonaparte himself reinforced this proclamation with one in his own style. He gave a summary of the events in Syria, representing them as a succession of victories, repeating that Acre was nothing but a heap of ruins, advising the Egyptians to continue their submission to the French, and declaring himself to be a friend and soon an adept of Islam. 'He has made it known to the members of the Divan that he loves the Mussulmans, cherishes the Prophet, and is studying the Koran and reading it every day. He intends to build a mosque which will not have its equal in the world, and to embrace the Mussulman religion.'

Never before had Bonaparte gone to such a length in expressing moral adhesion to Islam. He had no more intention than before of becoming a convert. He may have toyed with the idea of having a mosque built, as was done by the ancient sultans of Egypt, but he never issued any order that indicates it. All he was really concerned for was, on his return from an expedition represented as a preventive attack on Egypt's external enemies, to identify himself more than ever with the religious feeling of the majority of the Egyptian people.

Bonaparte could not conceivably have done more to make his Syrian campaign bring him in Egypt the prestige

of a brilliant and complete success. Did he succeed? He does not seem to have done. In spite of the triumphal return of the French troops, the natives were not ignorant of the facts that they had not captured Acre, nor Djezzar, and that they had had considerable losses and a great deal of suffering. The final impression of the Egyptians who saw them return, covered with a glory which made little appeal to the onlookers, was that they had met with ■ resistance which they had not always been able to overcome. This impression did not, however, become general until it could no longer greatly matter. At first and for some time, the victories were credited and increased the prestige of French arms. When Bonaparte's Egyptian subjects began to doubt whether he had been as uniformly successful as he claimed, he was on the point of returning to France, or had already returned.

In an army order Bonaparte 'expressed his satisfaction' with Dugua's administration during his absence from Egypt. It was due, he wrote, to the 'wise measures' adopted by the commandant of Cairo that Egypt had enjoyed tranquillity from February to mid-June, 1799. This praise of Dugua was fully justified. But the tranquillity for which Bonaparte praised him had been only relative. The disturbances that had broken out had not been repressed without a good deal of difficulty.

The highest-placed and the most highly respected of the Mussulman personages whom Bonaparte had intended to take in his suite on his Syrian expedition, the Emir Hadji, had deserted him at the first opportunity, before even crossing the Egyptian frontier. He had held back on various pretexts at Salayeh, had there engaged in endless intrigues, had held as hostages the French who were with him, had recruited accomplices, and had then fled before a detachment which had been sent to fetch him. Then, 'unmasking,' as Dugua said, he had sent his partisans to attack a river convoy and to capture military supplies. For ■ moment his revolt placed the French occupation in a rather precarious position. 'You will agree, General,

wrote Dugua to Bonaparte, 'that a man capable of collecting the scattered Mamelukes, the enemy Arabs, and the malcontents, and of giving a measure of cohesion to their movements, must have had good reason for hoping to do us a great deal of damage, in our weak position.'

The Emir Hadji's treachery was a repetition after an interval of six months of the defection of the sherif Koraïm at Alexandria ; and it was a renewal of the disappointment which that defection had brought in regard to the policy of association with the Mussulman element in Egypt. The consequences this time were graver and more perilous than before. Actual military operations, on a small scale, were needed to break down the rebel's resistance. He was prevented from doing further harm, but made good his escape.

The incident also wrecked Bonaparte's plan of showing the enemy in Syria that he had the Egyptian Mussulmans at his side. Omar Aga's Turkish company, with which the Emir Hadji had set out, was sent back to Cairo : its troops were raw and unreliable. The few Egyptian sheiks who had formed part of the same caravan also turned back ■ soon as they were able to.

From the Mussulman notables who had left Cairo with the Emir Hadji and returned without him, one more was missing—the Cadi Asker, the chief justice of Egypt. He was a Turk by birth, like the Emir Hadji ; and he allowed himself to be debauched by the Emir and accompanied him in his flight. An absconding Grand Cadi meant a serious defection.

At all events, neither the janissaries of the Turkish company nor the Egyptian sheiks whom it had escorted had joined the Emir in his revolt. There had been signs of disaffection in the Turkish company, but only among a minority, and the unit did not venture to desert. The fidelity of certain sheiks had been doubtful, but it had withstood the test. The sheik El Fayoumi, whose prestige among the fellaheen and the Bedouins had at first been of service to the rebel, left him and returned to Cairo, where he swore on his life that he would break off all relations



with the Emir. Two other sheiks, Mustapha Sawi and Ahmed el Arishi, abandoned him as soon as they discovered his duplicity. Their motive may have been either loyalty or prudence ; in any case they respected their engagements toward Bonaparte. The Emir's treason and the Cadi's defection were blows to his policy, but its efficacy was proved by the fidelity of the natives who parted from the two deserters.

Still better proof was offered by the attitude of the Cairo Divan. Once he was convinced of the disloyalty of the Emir Hadji, Dugua sequestered his property and incarcerated his kiaya and his brother-in-law, and requested the Divan to declare him a rebel, who had forfeited his office and was unworthy to conduct the caravan of Egyptian pilgrims to Mecca. On this occasion the conduct of the members of the Divan was irreproachable and of the utmost service to the French command. Not one of them made the slightest objection to the rigorous action taken or any attempt to evade his responsibilities. The sheiks Bekri, Sherkawi, El Mohdi, and all their colleagues answered to Dugua for the tranquillity of Cairo, and for the powerlessness of the Emir to foment the slightest unrest in the city, even if he were present there with all his troops. Bonaparte's lieutenant reported to his chief their loyalty and the value of their support. 'Cairo,' he wrote, 'continues to enjoy entire tranquillity. The members of the Divan are giving proof on every occasion of their firm resolve to maintain order.' A comparison of their loyalty on this critical occasion with the shortcomings of some and the hesitations of others before and during the insurrection at Cairo, shows undeniable progress, proving that Bonaparte's policy had borne fruit. The period of the Syrian expedition was perhaps that in which the Cairo Divan, that 'native magistracy grafted on foreign force,' best responded to the expectations of its founder.

The same may be said of the inhabitants of Cairo. There was no sign of popular disapproval of the sequestration of the Emir's property, the arrest of his servants and relatives, or the proclamation of his treason and deposition. 'The

sentence,' declared Abderrahman Gabarti, 'saddened the people.' But, apart from a little perturbation, due mainly to the fear of disturbances, there was no incident and no disorder. A few patrols carried out by French soldiers, and ■ few marches of the Greek gendarmes under Bartholomew and Joanni, sufficed to restore absolute calm very quickly. The incident gave proof of the growth of good sense among the inhabitants of the capital, and also of the growth of the Divan's influence over them; showing that in relying on that influence Bonaparte had not been nursing an entire illusion. The loyalty of the members of the Divan, the efficacy of their services, the calmness of the inhabitants of Cairo, and the influence exerted over them by their native aediles—such were the assets which the Emir Hadji's treason, disappointing though it was as regarded the policy of association inaugurated by Bonaparte, enabled to be put to the credit of that policy, intelligently continued by Dugua.

Bonaparte had shown the way. In seven months' activity under his orders, a body of collaborators had been formed who had assimilated his principles of government and his methods of administration. He had a staff of military and civil officers who had made his procedure their own. This was an important element in the situation in Egypt during the Syrian expedition, an element that contributed greatly to the satisfactory way in which, on the whole, the French occupation sustained the delicate test to which it was subjected by the absence of the leader, the considerable weakening of the occupying troops, and the final ill-success of the campaign abroad.

In the front rank of the best servants of Bonaparte's policy must be placed Poussielgue, the administrator general and Dugua's civil colleague from February to June, 1799. His rôle was essential. To him belongs a share of the recognition which was given to his superior. The witnesses of his activity have testified not only to his capacities but to his influence over the native officials and notables. 'The sheiks El Mohdi, El Sherkawi, ■ Sadat, El Bekri, and El Sawi, the Cadi and his lieutenant, and the aga of the janis-

saries, swore only by the vizier Poussielgue.' His influence over the natives had not been acquired without effort. Here, for example, is a picture sketched from memory by compatriots who had seen him at work : ' Sometimes, seated on ■ broad divan at the sheik El Sadat's, an amber tube in his mouth and a cup of coffee on its tray, he would chat easily with the sheik on our European customs, humorously threatening to make him a French philosopher. At other times, receiving the sheik El Mohdi, he would enjoy a talk with that learned Egyptian on the mechanism of Oriental governments and the effect of religious dogmas in private affairs, details of such vast interest to a conquering army.' Poussielgue had also made friends among the Copt intendants, the heads of corporations, and the merchants. His useful relations with the Egyptian notables, the confidence they had in him, and his adroitness in making use of their experience of the country and their credit with the population, were so many applications of the methods followed and examples set by Bonaparte. Poussielgue's services and advice were invaluable to Dugua in his heavy task.

Dugua was himself an apt pupil of his chief. He laid a heavy hand on those of the French who gave annoyance to the natives, and no less heavy a hand on natives who had aroused the anger of any of the French. He withdrew the command of a province from a senior officer who held it, giving these as his grounds : ' The violent methods he employed have roused his province to indignation. . . He seems to have indulged even in personal vindictiveness.' On the other hand, in reprisal for attacks and murders, Dugua had the sheiks of two villages executed. To avenge the massacre of a French garrison, he had a large village destroyed, no quarter being given to its inhabitants.

He cared little if he interfered with the habits of the natives, when security demanded it. He promulgated ■ set of regulations, suggested by Poussielgue, for the organization of the surveillance of the floating population of Cairo. Every publican, inn-keeper, owner of ■ *khan* (caravanserai or native hostelry), or houseowner, was required to notify within forty-eight hours, on pain of fine, the arrival of

every traveller lodged by him, giving name, country of origin, and destination. This was an entirely justified police measure, in which the modern hotelkeepers of Cairo may find the distant origin of the forms now filled up by their guests.

If any opportunity came for either of them to co-operate with the other in serving the material interests of the Egyptians or of the army, Dugua and Poussielgue seized it. They facilitated the transport of wheat and rice from Damietta to the French troops operating in Syria. The caravan from Darfur had great difficulties in 1799 owing to Desaix's operations in Upper Egypt; its arrival at Cairo suggested to Poussielgue a chimerical plan of economic penetration of the Egyptian Soudan, whose productions he dreamed of draining through Egypt; he had a vision also of the working of hypothetical gold mines.

Dugua and he scrupulously applied the principles of the Mussulman policy traced by Bonaparte. The general-in-chief had left orders that the sacred carpet, the *kiswa*, which was sent every year from Cairo to Mecca, should surpass in magnificence all those which had preceded it. The *Courrier de l'Egypte*, the newspaper of the expedition, had explained to its readers the traditional prerogative Egypt enjoyed in this regard. When the precious fabric was finished, Dugua caused it to be carried with great ceremony through the streets; he himself, his general staff, and a regimental band, joined with the members of the Divan, the officers of the janissaries, and delegations from the various police bodies, to make up a procession the magnificence of which astonished even the difficult Abderrahman Gabarti. But the revolt of the Emir Hadji was a difficulty in the way of the transport of the carpet by the caravan which he should have led. The circumstances of the moment created further difficulties in the way of the Egyptian pilgrimage. The pilgrimage was inopportune for various reasons; yet it was necessary for the command to hide the fact that it found it so.<sup>1</sup> Dugua went busily to work to solve

<sup>1</sup> Notably because the caravan would have to take to Mecca a present of about 600,000 francs, of which the expedition funds did not possess a single sou.

this difficulty without offending the Mussulman sentiment of the people. He took great pains to avoid all appearance of personal ill-will. At his request the Divan announced that the *kiswa* would be transported by sea to Jeddah, the port of Mecca. A letter then reached Cairo for Bonaparte from the sherif of Mecca, and Dugua took advantage of it to ask the sherif to send to Suez for the carpet. He calculated that it would take six weeks for the bearer of this message to reach Mecca and return, and that by then Bonaparte would be back and able to deal with the matter. 'Meanwhile,' he said, 'we shall not be worried by fanatics.' For all that, Abderrahman Gabarti notes in his record that certainly one of the most notable events of the year was the failure of the pilgrimage to take place. Thanks, however, to the wise precautions taken by Dugua, this grave breach of tradition provoked no outcry.

While he was occupied with this problem, there arrived the annual caravan of the Barbary pilgrims on their way to the Holy Places of Islam. The arrival beneath the walls of Cairo of some thousands of Moroccans, Algerians, and Tunisians, all armed, at a time when the French occupying forces were reduced to a minimum and were at grips in the provinces with local risings, constituted an embarrassment which might make it dangerous to take either excessive or inadequate precautions. Dugua arranged for the reception of the Barbary pilgrims at Embabeh, near Gizeh, and granted them free passage from that point to Suez, but on condition that they surrendered six hostages and gave up their arms to the French, who would return them on their departure from Egypt. These conditions were accepted; he then required their sheiks to write to the 'king of Morocco,'—to whom Dugua also wrote—bearing witness to the good reception given to the Barbary caravan. 'We parted from the pilgrims,' he reported to Bonaparte, 'with entire satisfaction on both sides.'

Needless to say, when the date arrived for a Mussulman religious festival to be held, Dugua saw to it that it should be celebrated with the utmost magnificence at Cairo and in the country towns. Thus, he embellished the festival of

Bairam with a patriotic interlude, the transport to the mosque of El Azhar of the first Turkish flags sent from Syria ; it is not quite clear whether the strict Mussulmans regarded this interlude as a homage or a profanation. In any case, they appreciated the fact that no difficulties were put in the way of their customs during Ramadan : 'The gatherings in the mosques and in private houses were never disturbed,' states Abderrahman Gabarti. The French joined, indeed, with gusto in the natives' nocturnal love-feasts, accepting invitations from the sheiks and notables to Turkish meals, offering them dinner, and extending 'many courtesies' to them. They omitted nothing to 'render the rapprochement more complete.' The Bedouins were indulging in incursions as far as the Arab cemeteries, the famous tombs of the Khalifs, outside the city walls ; during the three days of Bairam 'mobile columns were charged with the protection against the nomads of the pious pilgrimages of the Mussulmans of Cairo to the city of the tombs.'

The most sympathetic of the French towards Islam were outdistanced at this time by one of their leaders, who became an out-and-out convert. For some months General Menou, commanding at Rosetta, had been moving toward conversion and preparing his French correspondents for the news, by making much of the sympathy he had felt from the first for the Mussulman religion. He reported to Bonaparte and to Dugua that he had been invited to the mosque for Ramadan and had there engaged in the evening prayer 'like a good Mussulman,' with many followers of the Prophet. 'This has produced a very good effect,' he added, for he lent a political colour to his acts of Mussulman piety. 'I think,' he wrote, 'that we can do whatever we like with these people if we adopt or protect a large part of their customs.' This reason was, in any case, not the only one for his zeal for the worship of Allah. He had fallen in love with the daughter of the proprietor of the Rosetta baths, and, realizing that he could only have her if he married her and became a convert to Islam, he had determined to do so. In March 1799 he was accepted as a convert and married

his Egyptian Dulcinea, Zobeida. In marrying a woman of the country, a Mussulman descended, if his story may be accepted, from a family of sherifs, and consequently from Mahomet, and in becoming a convert to the religion of the Prophet, he was also acting in accordance with the theories which he had always supported as to the necessity of effecting a rapprochement between French and Egyptians and making the conquest of Egypt lead to a community of interests, ideas, and customs between the conquerors and the natives. 'I think,' he wrote of his marriage, 'that this step will be useful in public affairs'; and, if it was not solely for the sake of 'public affairs' that he had taken what he called 'this step,' he was certainly sincere in thinking that he was serving them.

General Menou's marriage and conversion—he was now Abdullah Jacques—was greeted with a smile by his companions at arms, and even with some ridicule; but there was no actual scandal. Some of the felicitations offered to the newly married man and neophyte had a touch of irony, but no one showed any sign of actual disapproval. The only one who had any right, indeed, to show it, Bonaparte, does not seem to have dreamed of criticizing Menou for this marriage or for his apostasy, whatever he may have thought of it. His native policy did not ask so much as this, but there was nothing contradictory to it in the radical application his lieutenant had made of it in his private life and in the domain of conscience. Menou's act forced the note, but it produced no discord. In any case, Bonaparte bore him no lasting grudge for it. The matrimonial and confessional episode which had happened in his absence produced no reaction of any sort from him. This episode does not, however, belong merely to the anecdotal history of the expedition; in itself and in the way in which it was received at the time, it throws light on the psychology of the generals and soldiers of the army in Egypt as apprentice colonizers.

'Colonist' was the term then used in the army in Egypt for an advocate of the colonial purpose which had been assigned to the expedition. Menou was a 'colonist' by fervent conviction. He had no doubt that the rallying of



**GENERAL KLÉBER**

*By Durettré,*



**GENERAL MENOÜ**

*Versailles Museum*





the native to French rule was possible and was already partially achieved. Writing to Kléber when Bonaparte had left, he said : ' Is religion opposed to our rule ? Not at all. We are not disturbed in the slightest by anything connected with the different cults ; we protect them all. The Egyptians do us justice in this regard. Are the ways of the inhabitants too different from ours for any hope of sincere union ? No. The inhabitants only want to be happier than they were under the empire of the beys. Let us govern them with wisdom, moderation, loyalty, and morality, and they will be our true friends.' Desaix was also a ' colonist,' with more discernment but with no less generosity. To the question ' how to govern Egypt ' he replied, a little later, that the country should not be governed either by enslaving the natives or by granting them too soon rights and privileges for which they were not yet ready. He recommended the creation of a class of small landowners, which did not yet exist in the country, by distributing land to the natives who showed loyalty, and he proposed to reward them also with the rights and privileges of French citizenship. ' The people of Egypt would then, if I could effect it, be incorporated in the French nation.' Donzelot also was a ' colonist,' and had entered into all the ideas of his immediate chief, Desaix ; he foresaw a brilliant material and moral future for the Egyptian expedition. But those of Bonaparte's lieutenants who shared Menou's optimism, Desaix's liberalism, or Donzelot's confidence, were the exception. The majority of the others were unwilling colonizers, readily inclined to scepticism as to the result of the efforts put forth to gain the sympathy of the natives ; and the sporadic explosions of fanaticism confirmed them in their views.

The Emir Hadji's treason and its results had hardly been overcome when the insurrection of the Mahdi broke out. This was a personage of a type new to the French of that period. They had never encountered an adversary of this sort ; in their correspondence they called him the angel El Mahdi. The appellation of angel served to express the element of inspiration or pretended inspiration, of the supernatural or pretended supernatural, in this miracle-

monger, half mystic, half impostor, the first specimen of the class of religious agitators with which the African enterprises of the nineteenth century were to familiarize the colonizing powers. The man who made his appearance in Egypt in April 1799 was a native of Barbary, who had emigrated from Derna to the province of Bahireh, where he began his agitation. His foreign origin enabled him to claim princely descent : he was called 'son of the sultan of West Africa.' He claimed, naturally, to be a prophet, and to have miraculous powers. He boasted that he would 'make the Infidels disappear like dust raised by the wind,' simply by looking at them ; and that he could 'take gold wherever he put his hand, soften cannon balls and bullets fired at him, and make bombs stay in the air.' The French generals quickly summed up this messenger from Allah as either the dupe of his own exaltation or the exploiter of the simplicity of his co-religionists ; but they noted the credit given to his extravagances and the ascendancy he exercised over simple minds. 'The leader of the Maugrabins,' wrote Marmont, 'is a madman who, according to general rumour, performs miracles.' Dugua wrote that 'a mass of absurd stories about him, well calculated to arouse the fanaticism of an ignorant people, are being spread throughout the province.'

Those of the orientlists of the expedition who had not accompanied Bonaparte to Syria explained to the military authorities in Cairo the phenomenon of the appearance of the Mahdi, the guide, the Messiah promised to the Mussulmans by their sacred book, and related him to his Koranic origins. More than forty years later they were to evoke, with picturesque precision, the echoes that still reached them of his preachings, the means of action he had used, and his ascendancy over his co-religionists : 'Promises for this world and the next, the influence of glory and of religion, high-sounding prophecies, ecstasies, revelations, miracles . . . According to him his body was incorporeal . . . All the food he needed was the milk obtained from dipping his fingers in ■ jug of milk and lightly brushing his lips with them. Naked as ■ Mussulman santon, he declared that the temperature had no effect on him, that the bullets of the

French would bounce off his flesh without injuring it, that his breath would extinguish the fire in their cannon, and that a speck of dust thrown from his hand would stop a cannon ball in its flight.' An interesting personage indeed, if he had not had for the military an interest of another order, having rallied to his standard a multitude estimated by some observers to number 15,000 foot soldiers and 4,000 horsemen—figures which no doubt were exaggerations.

It was a fact that, at the voice of Ahmed el Mahdi, Bedouins and fellaheen from the region in which his preachings resounded yielded to the frenzy of the Holy War and hurled themselves against the French. Generalizing from the many centres of agitation in various parts of the country, Dugua reported to Bonaparte 'a ferment all over Egypt which proves how ready this people is to revolt, either from fanaticism or from instability.' The 'Meccans' who had come in from Arabia to aid Desaix's adversaries had carried the 'spirit of the zealot' into Upper Egypt. 'A Barbary prophet, charlatan and wizard, has aroused it in Bahireh; it was quite enough to turn the heads of an ignorant, barbarian and superstitious people,' concluded Dugua. In such a case the methods employed by Bonaparte for preventing the spread of disorder were to show without delay a superiority of material force that would bring the misguided back to their senses, and to make a striking example of the most blameworthy. This was the course Dugua pursued, even though he had only forces which numerically were out of all proportion to those of the enemy. On May 9th Generals Lefebvre and Lanusse routed the Arab and Maugrabin followers of the Mahdi. Like the Emir Hadji, the Mahdi eluded capture; some said that he had been killed, others that he had escaped. In any case, his prestige was destroyed, and the belief in his incantations did not survive this experiment.

By the time when Bonaparte returned, both of the insurrections which had broken out in his absence had been put down. Even while away from Cairo he had remained present through the contact he had maintained with Dugua

and the Divan, and through the methods of command and of government which he had inculcated in his lieutenant. Thanks to this, French rule in Egypt had stood the tests of five months' absence of the head of the expedition with the greater part of his troops, of a very substantial reduction in the occupying forces, and of the failure of the siege of Acre.

## XIII

### THE EVE AND THE MORROW OF VICTORY

THE SYRIAN army was delighted to see Egypt again.<sup>1</sup> The soldiers were returning from the Syrian expedition to a country for which most of them had had no liking, a country which had disappointed them and in which they had felt themselves to be exiles ; but they were relieved to get back to its relative familiarity, and its suggestions here and there of their own country. Bonaparte himself, once the Syrian episode was over, returned to his rôle of governor of Egypt as to a mission in which his success had never been in doubt. He took up this mission once more with the unaltered intention of doing a lasting work. His activity extended simultaneously to a multitude of things. Once more decisions of the most diverse nature and effect were made one after another, in rapid succession.

Bonaparte was not deceived by the fawning and flattering with which the Egyptian notables welcomed him on his return, nor by the demonstrations of joy with which the people received him. He knew that on the whole their submission was as yet neither spontaneous nor stable. He was expecting an Ottoman offensive, knowing that his Syrian campaign had not dispelled the threat of it, and he was on guard against the repercussions which it would have among the mass of the natives.

<sup>1</sup> 'At one o'clock we saw the palm trees of Saleyeh, a sight that filled us with pleasure. We regarded Egypt as our country, and we were delighted to get back to our *penates*.' (Doguereau's diary.) 'Egypt, for which we have been longing, seems to us a new France, a second mother country.' (Diary of the siege of Acre.)

Several small mobile columns had been sent into the provinces to collect arrears of taxes and consolidate the pacification of regions in which there had been disturbances. At Cairo Bonaparte ordered a whole series of works to be carried out or considered—fortifications and installations and buildings for various purposes. These measures were of the same order as those which had immediately followed the October insurrection, and proceeded from the same preoccupations—to strengthen authority, to prevent insubordination, to facilitate the repression of disorders, and to adapt the capital to the rule which had been established in it. As before, the concern for parrying immediate dangers co-existed with plans for the future, plans of transformation and development.

The preparatory work for the map of Egypt had continued during the first six months of 1799. Dulong and Lescne had surveyed the environs of Alexandria ; Schouani had dealt with the province of Menouf and part of the Delta ; Simonel had completed the survey of the course of the Nile between Old Cairo and Boulak ; Jomard had drawn up the map of the province of Kelioub and had begun that of Garbieh. What was wanted now was to group and co-ordinate the partial surveys, reducing them to a uniform scale, and to outline general rules for all the survey officers. By a decision of June 28th, 1799, Bonaparte assembled the ordnance survey corps at the general staff offices, under the supervision of the chief of staff and the immediate command of Colonel Jacotin, and ordered that ' The chief of staff shall cause a general map of the country to be drawn up, on which shall be entered all the partial surveys, all the representative plans, etc. The astronomical observations will serve to provide the skeleton triangulation for this general map.' This order of Bonaparte's was the birth certificate of the admirable general map of Egypt which forms the atlas of the *Description* ; the map constitutes one of the finest monuments of the science of geography. The work was completed in 1806, and its expert elaboration was described by Jacotin in his remarkable *Mémoire sur la Construction de la Carte de l'Egypte*.

It was not Bonaparte's fault that his Egyptian expedition did not have an opportunity of also drawing up a hydrographic chart of the country. He demanded it from the corps of civil engineers, which was reorganized under his decision of June 29th, 1799, placing them under the orders of engineer-in-chief Le Père and defining their field of work—paths, roads, streets, communications, canals, irrigation works, and surveys. This enumeration attests the intention to employ them in Egypt in every branch of their art.

The general map and the hydrographic map had other purposes besides the enrichment of the patrimony of geography, although Bonaparte certainly took that scientific interest into consideration. They were intended mainly for facilitating the task of the command and the administration, for furnishing a reliable basis for the activity of the military, civil, and technical activities of government. The cartographic works carried out during the campaign in Egypt did not see the light until after the evacuation of the country; but in Bonaparte's original idea they were meant to be used on the spot for the development of the colonial enterprise of which Egypt was the theatre—even if they should be engraved and printed in Paris.

One of the collaborators in the atlas of Egypt, Jomard, has told of Napoleon's hesitation and final opposition to its publication when it was ready. The Emperor postponed publication during the whole of his reign; in January 1807, when he was at Warsaw, he authorized it; but he had hardly given the order when he revoked it and had all the plates placed under seal. They remained under a bushel until the end of the Empire. 'The map is to remain a secret of state until orders to the contrary.' The order to the contrary came only from Louis XVIII, at the end of 1814. Jomard mentions this fact as an indication of ideas of intervention in the East that still continued to cross the Emperor's mind; and no doubt he was right. But what better proof could there be of the practical purpose of the geographical labours ordered by Bonaparte, than this obstinacy of Napoleon's in refusing to allow them to be



published, from fear that others might profit by them, and in the hope that they might yet serve him !

At the time when Bonaparte was ordering these extensive works, he had abandoned no part of his original plan of permanently establishing French rule in Egypt. Kléber was dumbfounded by the vastness of the undertakings, but Bonaparte said to him one day that, except on the financial side, which had not yet come up to his expectations, 'the expedition is all right.' In a report to the Directory on June 23rd, 1799, he declared that 'the possession of this splendid region, the civilization of which will have so much influence on the national greatness and the future destinies of the oldest parts of the world, is assured for all time to the Republic.' These lines certainly express an illusion which military events were to belie within two years ; but they do define, in elevated terms, the colonial conception which the Egyptian expedition aimed at realizing. And this conception, which has become general in our own time, was less exclusively utilitarian and mercantile than that which had prevailed until then.

Like Bonaparte, the technicians in his service set no limit at that time on the duration of the enterprise in which they were associated with him ; and as specialists of their quality enter readily into ideas of progress, civilization, and economic restoration of the sort their chief was putting forward, they too were not appalled at the audacity of vast projects. The engineer Bodard was placed in charge of the survey and examination of the canal from Alexandria to Ramanieh, and the assessment of its serviceability as a means of communication, as part of the route from Cairo to Alexandria. He drew up a plan of works that would render it navigable throughout the year : 'Seventy thousand cubic fathoms of earth' would have to be moved, not without involving 'extensive resources' ! A similar proposal had been made by Chabrol and Lancret ; but the plan had to be dropped for the time. It contained the germ, however, of one of the public works that did most honour to the reign of Mehemet Ali—the Mahmoudieh canal.

This was a typical example of a course followed by many

projects during the Egyptian expedition. A military and political need led to the study of the means of satisfying it ; the study resulted in the proposal of a work of public utility, the benefits of which would far surpass the result originally sought ; but lack of time and money led to its postponement, and it was carried out later by others. In order to begin work on these large scale enterprises, Bonaparte and his companions would have needed to be free from the burden of a war with another country and to be assured of tranquillity within Egypt itself, and, finally, to have large financial resources at their disposal. These conditions were not fulfilled ; they were able, therefore, to do no more than bequeath the elaborated plans to posterity.

It was impossible for the Egyptian people to have any knowledge of the progress that might have been possible under the foreign rule which had been imposed on them ; and even if they had known, it would have meant nothing to the great majority. On the other hand, none of the acts of their master which might run counter to their sympathies or their interests escaped them. The Syrian campaign, the campaign in Upper Egypt, and the events in Lower Egypt during Bonaparte's absence, had left a considerable legacy of grounds for complaint against individuals who had committed themselves or become suspect in the eyes of the French. Bonaparte went to work at once on this accumulation and, as was his wont, he did so with energy. He went to work with rifle and scimitar. For more than a week orders went from him to Dugua to have persons shot or beheaded. ' Give orders for all the Maugrabins, Meccans, etc., from Upper Egypt who fought against us to be shot. Give orders for the two Maugrabins who summoned the Arabs to revolt to be shot. . . . Give orders to Captain Omar to report to you on those Maugrabins of his company who were arrested, and for all those who have behaved badly to be shot.' This order was dated June 19th, 1799. Two days, three days, and five days later there were fresh batches of capital sentences—an individual charged with participation

in the assassination of General Dupuy in October, 1798 ; two others, 'charged with having talked against the French' ; a Mameluke who had returned to Cairo without a passport ; a second Mameluke ; seven men of Omar's company, described as 'rogues' ; two Turks. Dugua, governor of Cairo, to whom these orders were sent, found that the executions were wasting a lot of powder and shot. 'The shootings,' he wrote to Bonaparte, 'are becoming frequent in the citadel, and I propose to substitute a headsman. This would save our cartridges and make less noise.' Bonaparte replied in the margin : 'Approved.'

Thus the condemned men were dealt with by a less costly and more discreet procedure. Capital sentences became, moreover, rarer after the series of executions carried out between June 19th and 29th. The first to suffer under the headsman secured by Dugua appears to have been Abdullah Aga, commandant of the garrison of Jaffa, who had been brought as a captive to Cairo. Bonaparte had had the idea of obtaining ransom for the Turkish prisoners captured in Syria. All of them, however, were entirely destitute, and they declared that they could not find the ransom demanded. He then decided to have the highest in rank among them, Abdullah Aga, put to death ; the ransom for his liberation had been set at the respectable sum of 10,000 *talaris*. The ransom was not paid, and the ex-commandant of Jaffa lost his head. In ordering Dugua to have 'his neck severed,' Bonaparte justified his harshness in this way : 'According to all that the inhabitants of Syria told us of this man, he is a monster from whom the earth should be delivered.' The 'monster's' companions, though insolvent like him, were allowed to live, but kept in captivity and, since Bonaparte became humane again after this debauch of punishments, were given a little pay and a ration. With this addition of prisoners of war, the guests of the citadel gaols reached a figure that was not negligible. The commandant of the fortress complained that his garrison was 'too small ; he points out that the prisoners are more numerous than the soldiers for guarding them.'

Executions and arrests, when they were of persons of

some note, were mentioned by Abderrahman Gabarti in his diary. Thus it is evident that they did not escape the notice of the native notables, in spite of the substitution of the headsman for the firing party; and the notables could be trusted to have sufficient discretion to spread the news, with appropriate comment. This had the advantage of inspiring a salutary fear, but the disadvantage of exciting pity for the victims and resentment against the French.

The need for prompt action sometimes led the French into the error of excessively summary justice. 'The women of the streets,' wrote Dugua to Bonaparte, 'are infesting the quarters. To get rid of them it would be best to have those caught in barracks drowned.' Bonaparte's reply was this marginal note: 'Give the order to the aga.' To be thrown into the Nile was the punishment reserved under native law for Mussulman women guilty of relations with Christians. But the existence of this native custom did not excuse the French for adopting it, seeing that it was barbarous. Moreover, it was not for them to claim, even against prostitutes of the worst sort, the application of the death penalty instituted by the Mussulmans for the punishment of the weaknesses of Mussulman women towards Infidels.

This, however, was a habitual sight, and a few drownings of prostitutes by the native police made little sensation. It was different with a step taken at this time by Bonaparte against a personage of quality. On June 26th he ordered the arrest of the mullah Zadé, son of the *cadi* Asker, who had deserted with the Emir Hadji. After his father's flight, the mullah Zadé had temporarily assumed and carried out the exalted functions of Grand *Cadi*. He had not personally given occasion for any complaint, but his parentage rendered him suspect. On Bonaparte's order, Dugua proceeded to arrest him, with his suite, women excepted, and to transfer them to the citadel. Bonaparte informed the Cairo Divan of the fact, requesting it to choose a new *cadi* and specifying that he must be an Egyptian. 'I have had the *cadi* arrested,' he wrote, 'because I have reason for suspecting him, and because his father, whom I had loaded with gifts, has repaid me with the blackest of ingratitude. Please present to me

someone to fill this post. ■ should be a man born in Egypt.'

These last words announced an innovation which Bonaparte must certainly have expected to find well received by the Egyptians. The deserting *cadi* and his son and successor, like all their predecessors, were Turks sent from Constantinople to fill this post. In putting an end to the practice of reserving to a Turk the function of Grand *Cadi* of Egypt, and in summoning an Egyptian to this post of head magistrate, Bonaparte had had no suspicion that he would fail to receive the approval of the native Mussulmans and their representatives. But matters turned out entirely differently. The Cairo Divan showed the utmost disapproval of the removal of the mullah *Zadé* and his arrest, and of the request to it to choose an Egyptian successor to him. The sheik *Sadat* represented to Bonaparte the feeling that had been aroused among his colleagues and the population, interceded in favour of the unfortunate *cadi*, and asked that he should be released and restored to his post. Thus, considerations of personal friendship with the mullah *Zadé*, of justice in view of his correct attitude, of solidarity with him, and finally of the rather scandalous nature of the action taken, which seemed an assault on his high function, prevailed completely, among the members of the Divan and the sheiks of Cairo, over the race feeling and Arab nationalism which Bonaparte had hoped to bring into play.

Bonaparte held to his decision, and hastened its application. *Dugua* made inquiries and quickly informed him of the proper procedure for the appointment of a *cadi* of Egypt and of the customary ceremonial for his investiture. Bonaparte agreed to this. The Divan was given an urgent summons, and resigned itself to nominating as *cadi* the sheik *El Arishi*, whom Bonaparte appointed at once and had proclaimed before the native assembly. The new *cadi* was then led in state to the general-in-chief, from whose hands he received the *pelisse* of honour, and was then led back to his home under the escort of the native authorities of Cairo and of French officers. Public criers announced

his investiture to the inhabitants. The mullah Zadé, now a simple private individual, was set at liberty and left the country.

The sensation caused by this incident was so great at one moment as to lead Bonaparte to give a full explanation of it by means of posters to the population of Cairo, and through the commandants of provinces to the country population. His reply to the Divan's representations, placarded in the streets, and his instructions to the commandants of provinces, entered in general orders, furnished him with the opportunity of explaining his political ideas. He asked the Divan to realize, and to make the people realize 'that the reign of the Osmanlis is ended, that a sheik who is a native of Egypt has the talent and the character needed for filling the post of cadi, and that the step which the general-in-chief has taken is a proof of his solicitude for the happiness and prosperity of the Egyptian people.' With the commandants of provinces he was still more explicit. He instructed them to make known to their Divans that the Cairo assembly had appointed the sheik El Arishi to be cadi of Egypt, and that he desired that all the provincial cadis should be confirmed and invested, in accordance with customs, by the new head of their magistracy; and he requested his generals to act accordingly on behalf of the people under their jurisdiction. 'The commandants of provinces will bring home to the people on all occasions that it is now time that there should be an end of the government of the Osmanlis that it is against the spirit of the Koran that the Osmanlis and people of Constantinople should come to administer justice to a people whose language they do not understand; that it was not until three or four centuries after the death of the Prophet that Constantinople became Mussulman; that if the Prophet returned to earth he would not establish his domicile in Constantinople but in the holy city of Cairo, on the banks of the Nile; and that the intention of the general-in-chief is that ■ cadis shall be natives of Egypt, unless they are natives of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.'

The incident had already been closed by the *fait accompli* when Bonaparte's lieutenants were able to develop this theme to the members of their divans. It is not known what the Egyptian population really thought of this eloquent appeal to its national rights. What is certain is that the notables of Cairo did not willingly accept the appointment of an Egyptian *cadi*, chosen from among their number.

To this period of his Egyptian proconsulate belong certain memories recalled by Napoleon at St. Helena, and dictated by him to Bertrand. He reconstructs the exhortations he addressed to the sheiks. 'Why is the Arab nation in subjection to the Turks? How is it that fertile Egypt and holy Arabia are dominated by peoples who have come from the Caucasus? If Mahomet were to come down to-day from heaven, where would he go? To Mecca? He would not be in the centre of the Mussulman empire. To Constantinople? It is a profane city, in which there are more Infidels than Believers; he would be in the midst of his enemies. No, he would prefer the blessed water of the Nile; he would come to dwell in the mosque of Gama el Azhar, that first key of the holy kaaba.' After putting these words into the mouth of General Bonaparte, the captive emperor continued: 'Thus addressed, the faces of these venerable old men beamed, they bowed their bodies, with their arms folded, and exclaimed: "*Tayeb, tayeb!* How true!"' A picturesque recollection, eloquent of scenes actually lived through. The language put by Napoleon into Bonaparte's mouth closely follows the authentic text of his instructions to his generals and his address to the members of the Cairo Divan. The reception given to his arguments by his audience at the time may well have been that which he described at St. Helena. But the fact remains that he was reduced to imposing on them by his authority the first application of his principle of emancipation from the Turk and of Egyptian particularism.

Bonaparte had begun by posing to Turkey as champion of the Sultan's rights against the Mamelukes; to the Egyptians as liberator of the people, enemy of the Mame-

lukes, but friend of the Sultan; to the Mamelukes as adversary of their rule, but ready to make room for them under his own. Now the irreconcilable hostility of the Turks and Mamelukes led him into a fourth position: the reign of the Osmanlis was over in Egypt, equally with that of the Mamelukes; and the public functions, under French rule, were reserved to Egyptians. It was well thought out, ingenious, even prophetic; but it did not 'work' by any means as well as Bonaparte had supposed it would, because it was in advance of the ideas of the Egyptians of his day. The idea of the right of natives of Egypt to replace the Turks in their offices had not yet been formed; or had occurred only to a tiny minority of individuals. So also with the feeling in Egypt of Arab solidarity in face of the Turk. The Egyptians of that time regarded the Sultan as their legitimate sovereign, the supreme head of Islam, and the wielder of redoubtable power: in the end he would get the better of the French invaders, and consequently there could be no thought of exposing themselves to his vengeance. Thus it was impossible for the significance Bonaparte had given to the change of *cadi* to be of appreciable service to the French cause—and it was not.

The French cause continued to be disserved by the troublesome impecuniosity which forced the administration into a hunt for money. Financial difficulties had been smoothed away after a fashion before Bonaparte's departure for Syria, but had reappeared during his absence. Before he set out he had issued a decree holding the *sheiks el beled* and other native functionaries responsible for the payment of all taxes due. In spite of that, nothing had come in except with difficulty and under constraint. The collection of the *miri* had been hard work. Receipts were still further reduced by attacks on convoys. Levies in kind yielded little. The land registration fees now brought in next to nothing. 'The financial administration was living from hand to mouth.' Amid the mass of military and administrative expenses, Poussielgue chose with discernment those which could not be deferred, and did not meet or undertake



to meet the rest. He also farmed out the contributions in kind from Middle and Upper Egypt to two associations, formed by French and Italian merchants.

After Bonaparte's return, expenditure increased again with the new works started ; while the expenses of which Poussielgue had postponed settlement had become yet more pressing. The chest was almost empty ; army pay was five or six months in arrear. On June 12th the cash in hand amounted to 2,673 *livres*, 12 *sols*, and 13 *deniers*. ' I have no funds left,' wrote Poussielgue to Dugua. ' You cannot imagine all the demands the general-in-chief makes on me and how greatly he embarrasses me.' Once again it was impossible to wait for taxation revenues to come in to meet urgent requirements ; money had perforce to be procured immediately. Bonaparte sought it partly in forced loans and partly through other expedients. The Jews of Cairo had not ' participated in the extraordinary levy ' ; they were taxed 150,000 francs, reduced later to 100,000. To prevent payment being dragged out, any arrears left at the date fixed, 1 Messidor, were to be punished with a fine of 5 per cent. Poussielgue was instructed to inform the principal Damascene merchants that Bonaparte ' desired ' that they should each lend him 30,000 francs ; the sum was to be paid over on the following day. These reluctant lenders were to be given letters of exchange on the army chest, payable on 15 Thermidor. Poussielgue had to arrange repayment in this same month of Thermidor of the sum of 150,000 francs advanced by the Copts. They must not be allowed to assume that they could reimburse themselves out of taxes farmed out by them, ' for in that case it would be as if they had paid us nothing.' These same Copts, when acting as intendants of finances, farmers of taxes, etc., had the objectionable habit of retaining public funds in their possession on the pretext of recovering advances ; very precise instructions were issued to stop this practice. The wives of the Bey Hassan el Djeddawi and of the Mamelukes in his suite were ordered to pay before 1 Messidor, on pain of arrest and of the confiscation of their properties, 10,000 *talaris* in repurchase of their houses and furniture. All

landed property the titles to which were not presented for registration within a period of a month was to become the property of the Republic. The properties of landowners who had not paid their *miri* by 30 Messidor were to be confiscated. Some of the generals whose funds were reputed to be less desperately low than those of the central Treasury were requested to come to its aid. 'You are very rich,' Bonaparte wrote to Desaix, then in Upper Egypt.<sup>1</sup> 'Be so generous as to send us 150,000 francs.' He wrote to Fugière, commanding the province of Garbieh: 'Try to send us as soon as possible 100,000 francs; we are urgently in need of it'; this in addition to forty fine horses for remounts for the general-in-chief's Guides. Such were the desperate devices by which the exhausted finances of the expedition were fed, and revived just sufficiently for the military and administrative machinery to continue to work.

The respite gained lasted only six weeks—no more than a morning for a Treasury. In the middle of August the scarcity of money was once more paralysing every department. Although the Mint was hard at work, the hunt for cash had to begin again. Gunpowder had been found in the house of a certain Hadji Mustapha: 6,000 *talari*s fine, payable, 'on pain of being shot,' half on the following day and half within a month. Village taxes were still in arrear: Dugua was ordered to call for an explanation from all the *sheiks el beled* who had not forwarded their dues, and to signify to them that in the event of non-payment before 1 Fructidor their dues would be augmented by one-third; and, if the sum so increased were not paid within the next ten days, they would 'have their heads cut off.' In the citadel in Cairo there were hostages from Jaffa and Gaza, held for ransom: Poussielgue was ordered to notify them that if they did not hasten payment the demand would be increased. Some of the forced loans and money penalties

<sup>1</sup> Yet, only a few weeks before. Desaix had written to Dugua: 'We have no money for organizing the provinces . . . we have great difficulty in getting in levies. . . . We have not a sou for the requirements of the current month.'

decreed in June remained partly unpaid : Poussielgue was ordered to hasten recovery. Certain intendants entered the cost of horses and other animals requisitioned as an abatement from the taxes due from their provinces : they were forbidden to make any abatement whatever. *Sheiks el beled* in Upper Egypt alleged that they had already, under duress, paid to the Mamelukes the *miri* due from their villages ; they showed receipts. So much the worse for them ; their excuse was not admitted. Revenues should have come in from the Rosetta tobacco traders and from the Customs at Suez and Kosseir : the matter was to be investigated. The Damascene merchants, who had already been well bled, were reputed to have plenty of resources still left : Poussielgue was ordered to demand from the six chief merchants, as a loan, the sum of 100,000 francs, which would be repaid 'in wheat.' General Cambis, tenant of a house that was national property, was not paying his rent regularly : two days' imprisonment in the citadel !

In addition to taxation devices, money penalties, and forced loans, the struggle against the deficit was carried on by means of economies. Staff was reduced, salaries were cut down ; the number of employees of military and civil departments was ordered to be kept down to the minimum ; a monthly maximum of salaries payable to the staff of each department was fixed by decision of the general-in-chief ; the sums allowed for bread-making for the troops were reduced. Thanks to all this, Bonaparte considered himself to be in a position to announce to his troops that two months' pay would be issued : an expenditure not justified by the state of the chest ! Up to the last moment of his Egyptian proconsulate, he had to battle with extreme shortage of money.

And up to the last moment that battle injured his chances of success in rallying native support. Not that the forced loans made up in the aggregate any very considerable sum. It has been calculated that during the whole period of the French occupation they amounted to 4,286,859 francs, of which 3,424,505 francs were repaid. Nor did the total of the ordinary and extraordinary taxes reach an

abnormal or exaggerated figure : it has been calculated also that during the whole period of the Egyptian expedition the figure amounted to 59,332,276 francs, an annual average of 20,000,000 francs. A total annual revenue of 20,000,000 francs, for a country like Egypt, was in no way excessive,<sup>1</sup> and, according to the calculations of the French administrators, was less by one-third than the revenue the Mamelukes drew from the country. Thus the French administration placed no burden on the Egyptians, costing them less than the despots from whom it had delivered them. But it was at grips with money shortage at the very time when the new rule needed to gain acceptance ; it was thus unable to show itself either disinterested or even patient at the time when it would have been most useful to do so. On the contrary, it was obliged by its needs to procure at once from the country the resources essential to the expedition for military and governmental purposes, and, without waiting for the collection of revenues, which had been disorganized by the invasion itself, to use every possible device to get money into its coffers.

Of the three generals who in turn were governors of Egypt, it was Bonaparte who had the most difficult task in this regard. It was he who had to provide the financial foundation of French rule, at a time when the conquest, occupation, and pacification of the country, the organization of its defence, the creation of its administrative institutions, the Syrian expedition, and operations against a Turkish army of invasion, all had to be seen to, and before experience had been acquired and precise data collected to enable the command to dispense with feeling its way, passing from one method to another, and continually revising its system. It may be doubted whether in the same conditions anyone else could have solved his financial problems without his native policy suffering even more. It did suffer, and a great deal.

<sup>1</sup> The French military and civil authorities best able to judge assessed the revenue to be raised from Egypt at 25,000,000 francs a year, and gave this as an entirely reasonable assessment.

Between these two series of desperate financial expedients, Bonaparte had faced, cut to pieces, and thrown into the sea a large Turkish army, which had landed from a fleet on the shore of Aboukir. The battle of Aboukir took place on July 25th, 1799. Bonaparte left Cairo on the 16th. The news of his victory reached the city on the 29th and was announced to the population on the 30th. He himself returned to Cairo on August 11th. Between July 16th and 30th there had been a fortnight during which the maintenance of order in Egypt presented problems of critical importance and was in some danger.

Bonaparte had declared, and had had the statement repeated everywhere, that his Syrian campaign had dispersed or destroyed the effectives assembled for a Turkish offensive against him, and had thus preserved Egypt from invasion. The appearance of a Turkish fleet off Aboukir, and the landing of a Turkish army in Egypt, six weeks after he had brought back the Syrian expeditionary force, gave the lie to his claims in respect of his preventive operation. The natives could not fail to conclude that the effect of the Syrian expedition had not been what he said it was, and that the Turks had not been effectively disposed of. This would go to confirm the belief the Mussulman Egyptians had had in the immense power of their sovereign the Sultan, and their conviction that the invincible arms of the Commander of the Faithful would certainly dislodge the Infidels. Finally, apart from any reasoning of this sort and any calculation of probabilities, there would come into play the factor of the Mussulman natives' sympathy for the Mussulman adversary of their Infidel master. Thus there was added to the peril of the Turkish invasion that of a rising within the country, which would have considerably increased the difficulties of the French.

Bonaparte was alive to the test to which the Turkish attack would subject the pacification of the country. The test was rendered still more critical by the necessity for his absence from Cairo to march against the enemy with the greater part of his forces, and for summoning to join him on the coast the greater part of the contingents that were

guarding the provinces. The circumstances thus left little material means for guaranteeing order in Cairo, which would be divested of troops for the period of his absence, the duration of which must depend on events. In this case, even more than in that of the Syrian expedition, it was necessary to count mainly on victory and, meanwhile, on a discreet policy combined with such military precautions as were possible. Bonaparte took steps to assure an early victory. He took prompt steps also in regard to military precautions, ordering Captain Nicolo to 'return to Cairo with his Greeks'; ordering Dugua to send this instruction by messenger after messenger, since in this emergency the fidelity of the Greeks seemed less doubtful than that of the Mussulmans; and ordering Desaix to hold himself ready to march to Cairo at the first appeal from Dugua, who was authorized to send for him in the case of 'major events.' Finally, in regard to policy, the main responsibility fell on Poussielgue, to whom Bonaparte wrote: 'I have no doubt that you will help by your activity and your conciliatory spirit to maintain tranquillity in Cairo, as you did during my Syrian expedition.' But this does not by any means imply that Bonaparte did not himself take a hand in policy, both before leaving and during his absence.

He surrounded the reasons for his departure with all possible secrecy. Even to his closest French collaborators, Dugua and Poussielgue, he described it as only 'for a few days.' He carefully kept its purpose from the knowledge of the Cairo Divan, and, in order not to have to give the members an explanation, he refrained from calling them together, although he had done so before his departure for Syria. They only learned of his departure, and its reason, from him when he was already at Ramanieh. Thus Bonaparte seems to have attached some importance to gaining ■ little time before the natives knew why he had left the capital.

Actually the Cairenes knew of his departure the moment it took place, and suspected the reason before they were told it. Their curiosity was aroused at once at the sight of troops departing in the direction of the coast, joined by

the general staff. Dugua and Poussielgue, when asked about these movements, tried to mislead their indiscreet questioners : the troops and the general staff, they declared, had left in pursuit of Murad Bey. 'But they do not seem convinced,' said Poussielgue of his interlocutors. His first impression, however, was entirely optimistic. 'All seems to be perfectly quiet,' he reported to Bonaparte, 'and I think that if anything should happen the ulema would be the last to take sides against us, as the new order of things suits their interests very well.' There was only one symptom of the reflections to which the event was giving rise, but a significant one : the taxpayers stopped coming to the land tax and registration offices, to which they had been flocking on the preceding days. Why make payment to an administration which might soon be swept away ? It was not, indeed, through the natives' confidence in the success of the French that Poussielgue was able soon to anticipate that order would be maintained, but only through their waiting attitude. After confidential talks with the principal people in the city he wrote to Bonaparte : 'You need have no fear in regard to Cairo : they have assured me that the strictest neutrality is the system adopted, and that there are plenty of people watching to see that it is not violated.'

Bonaparte set to work to provide other motives than simple prudence for this neutrality. From Ramanieh he wrote a letter to the Cairo Divan in which he did what he could to counteract the moral effect of the Turkish offensive and the influence of Mussulman invaders on the Mussulman inhabitants. He had only allowed the Turks, he wrote, to land in order to be able to exterminate or capture them ; his enemies had come in the hope of joining the Mamelukes and the Arabs in pillaging and devastating Egypt ; though Mussulmans, they had allied themselves, in disobedience of the Prophet's injunctions, with Infidels and idolaters ; they had embarked on vessels flying the Cross and had so lost the protection of Allah and of Mahomet ; with them, in the same fleet, were Russians, well known to be loathers of 'those who believe in the oneness of God, because, in their error, they believe that there are three' ; Allah would give

him, Bonaparte, the victory because it was the divine will that had sent him to Egypt 'to change the face of the country and to replace a régime of devastation by a régime of order and peace.' Bonaparte was virtually posing as the champion of Islam against Mussulmans who had been disqualified by their compromise with Infidels. He was trying to discredit his Mussulman adversaries in the eyes of his Mussulman subjects by ■ sort of Islamic exegesis.

If Dugua is to be believed, he had some success. 'I have had your letter translated for the Divan,' wrote Dugua to Bonaparte. 'It seems that the fact that the Russians have joined the Turks will make an impression extremely unfavourable to the latter on the minds of the Mussulmans. The city of Cairo remains entirely tranquil.' Three days later, the hope Dugua placed in this argument could, Bonaparte was assured, be transformed into certainty: 'It seems that the idea that there are Russians mixed with the Turks who have landed at Aboukir has made a lively impression. I have no doubt that if they were to see the arrival of 200 or 300 prisoners of war, the majority of the inhabitants would be ready to join with us, to help us to rout an army composed of so extraordinary a mixture.'

In reality, a good deal of illusion entered into this optimism of Dugua's. Precisely at that moment the news of the Ottoman army's capture of the fort of Aboukir became known in the city. 'This news,' notes Abderrahman Gabarti, 'caused joy among the inhabitants of Cairo, who cursed the Christians aloud.' Two days later, letters reaching the capital brought the false news of the capture of Alexandria. The news, this time, was too good for the Mussulmans who passed it from one to another to be able to place unreserved faith in it; they attributed it to a ruse on the part of the native Christians, intended to lead them into committing some folly. But, in spite of their meritorious unwillingness to believe the worst, their submission became more and more doubtful. The 25th to the 30th of July were critical days in the fortnight's suspense as to the issue of the struggle. Poussielgue became disillusioned and bitter: 'You cannot rely,' he wrote to Bonaparte, 'in



any way on the inhabitants of this country, whoever they may be. There is nothing, however, to fear at Cairo ; they are afraid here : but we must on no account have a reverse.'

With few exceptions, he had only blame for his native collaborators. 'The sheik Sadat,' he wrote, 'is the man with whom I am least satisfied. Seid Omar is behaving fairly well. The sheik El Bekri is afraid. The others are traitors or fanatics. The sheik El Mohdi is an ambitious man out for popularity and renown ; he would sacrifice all the French rather than lose a single degree of his repute. He is still assiduous, however, in coming to see us.' Such was the judgment passed at this moment by the head of the civil administration on the attitude of the natives whom Bonaparte had associated with him in authority. Pous-sielgue and Dugua had no doubt that many of these men had entered into collusion with the enemies of French rule, the Mameluke beys and the Turkish army leaders.

Their judgments and suspicions were probably exaggerated. But, as the men responsible for the security of Cairo during Bonaparte's absence, they undoubtedly felt it to be uncertain, and attributed its maintenance only to two factors—the fear of severity, and doubt as to the result of the fighting. They had been well satisfied with the conduct of the Divan during the Syrian expedition ; they were thoroughly dissatisfied with it during Bonaparte's march against Aboukir and even, as we shall see, during his return.

Nevertheless, there was no movement, either in Cairo or in the country. The population was awaiting the development of events : earlier experiences had taught it the danger of coming too soon into the open. No insurrectionary movement interfered anywhere with the concentration or the operations of the French troops ; there was no interruption of communication between Cairo and Alexandria, and no attempt to interrupt them on the part either of the settled population or of the nomads who roved through the north-west of Lower Egypt.

The news of the victory at Aboukir became known at Cairo on July 29th, 1799. It was announced to the in-



SHEIK EL SHERKAWI

SHEIK EL FAYOUMI

MOALLEM EL GEOARI

THREE GREAT SHEIKS OF CAIRO

*By Rigo. Versailles Museum*



habitants of the city at 6 a.m. on the 30th by three salvos of artillery from each of the city forts. Dugua requested the Divan to publish the news of the complete destruction of the Turkish army, and to add the customary advice to disregard 'the insinuations of the evilly-disposed.' He informed the commandants of provinces of the triumph of the French arms. The triumph had been of great value, he confided to Bonaparte; it had freed him from rather keen apprehensions. Now, however, there was nothing to fear: Fortune had given her verdict and had shown who was the stronger.

From July 30th to August 11th, the date of Bonaparte's return to Cairo, there was no further reason to doubt the natives' discretion; but their attitude remained worth watching as an index of their feelings. Even the victory of the French and their approach on return to their quarters did not at once induce the leaders of the Mussulman population to suppress the signs of their vexation and hostility. Dugua declared to Bonaparte that he had found 'a great deal of frigidity in the Divan on the announcement of the victory at Aboukir, a great deal of urgency in calling for the liberation of the prisoners of all categories, a great deal of reluctance to get on with the administrative measures most needed, and finally a great deal of readiness to complain of the calumnies of the Christians.' Poussielgue, for his part, reported that the effect produced on the notables was less than he had expected. 'The Divan,' he wrote, 'has received the news very frigidly; it showed little inclination to publish it. . . . It warmly and openly declared itself the protector of every Turk caught red-handed or charged with an offence against our security.' Then, after stating that the Divan charged the aga for administration with having been bought by the French and having interfered in a many things outside his competence, Poussielgue concluded by repeating: 'All these people are secretly conspiring against the French and are engaging in suspicious correspondence with Syria.' Other administrators built more readily than he on the army's laurels as an influence over the natives in favour of French rule; but none denied the disappoint-

ment and mortification caused in Egypt by the Turkish defeat. 'There was no outbreak of joy on the faces of our Mussulman zealots,' wrote Chanaleilles, the French agent at Damietta. 'But they show us plainly enough that their opinion of our strength and stability . . . renders them accessible to feelings of prudence and moderation.' The effect, in the last analysis, of the news of the victory at Aboukir, from the point of view of internal conditions, was one of intimidation.

This effect was reinforced by Bonaparte's return to Cairo, on 24 Thermidor, year VII (August 11th, 1799). Crowds poured into the Ezbekieh square to see him return, and there looked at the prisoners he brought with him, among them the commander in chief of the conquered army, Mustapha Pasha. The incredulous were convinced: the French had not exaggerated the proportions of their victory. Mustapha Pasha was led on horseback, escorted by thirty officers of high rank, to Gizeh, where he was interned; the rest, the small fry among the captives, were imprisoned in fort Sulkowski. In order to impress the natives of Egypt, there had been added to the spectacle of the prisoners of war that of the Turkish flags captured. It was an unquestionable demonstration, on the very soil of Egypt, in a battle of which neither the importance nor the issue could be contested, of the superiority of strength of the French over the Turks.

On the day after his victory Bonaparte had written from Alexandria to the Directory: 'During the fortnight this expedition has taken, I have been very satisfied with the feeling among the inhabitants of Egypt. No one has stirred, and everyone has continued his ordinary activities.' The statements made by Dugua and especially by Pous-sielgue show what value can be attached to that assertion, so far as concerns the 'feeling' of the Mussulman Egyptians. But, on the other hand, the concrete facts are there to show its truth so far as concerned their conduct.

In October 1798 it had sufficed for the Holy War to be preached, and for the news to be spread that a Turkish army would soon be on the march, to provoke insurrection

at Cairo, although the city was well supplied with French troops and Bonaparte himself was there. In July 1799, with Cairo almost depleted of French troops and Bonaparte absent, there had been no rising of the Mussulman population either at the news of the appearance of a Turkish fleet, or at that of the landing of the Turks and their capture of the fort of Aboukir, or at the false rumour of the fall of Alexandria. This evidences considerable progress, whatever its underlying cause. It was a more notable advance even than that shown by the maintenance of order in Cairo during the Syrian expedition and the retreat from Acre ; for the provinces had remained absolutely quiet during the Aboukir campaign, while some of them had risen during the Syrian one. There was enough in this to provide some consolation for Bonaparte for the fact that his Mussulman subjects had hoped for his defeat and had been depressed by his victory.

That did not save them from his reproaches. The echo of the complaints made by Poussielgue and Dugua is to be found in Bonaparte's language to the members of the Cairo Divan who had come to congratulate him on his triumphal return. 'You behaved well,' he said to them through his interpreter, 'during my absence on the Syrian expedition ; but not this time. You thought the French were going to be exterminated and that none would return. You showed pleasure at the prospect, and you offered resistance to the aga's orders.' He himself interrupted his dragoman by exclaiming, in the pigeon-Italian which was then the current European idiom of the Levant : 'The sheiks Modhi and Savi *non bono* !'

Thus wrote an Arab annalist of Bonaparte's interview with the sheiks of Cairo. But according to a Christian chronicler he did not confine himself to triumphing over their disappointed hopes ; he showed them how ill-judged they were. 'I am astonished,' he said, 'to see your chagrin over my victory. You have not yet been able to appreciate me ! Yet I have often told you that I was a Mussulman, that I believed in the oneness of God, that I honoured the Prophet Mahomet, and that I loved the Mussulmans. You

have not placed faith in my words ; you have supposed that I was impelled to them by fear.' Bonaparte, according to this account, went on to take credit once more in the eyes of the Mussulmans for his rigours against Catholics : ' I hate the Christians, I have destroyed their religion, overturned their altars, killed their priests, smashed their crosses, and denied their faith. And yet I see them rejoicing in my joy and sorrowing for my trouble ! '

These words cannot have been pronounced by Bonaparte on this occasion. But, as we have seen, he said as much at other times ; and we have shown also that as a rule he failed to carry conviction. In boasting of having rejected and ill-treated Christianity, he failed to produce the effect at which he aimed. He failed equally when he indulged at length in exaggerated protestations of admiration and zeal for Islam. It is the old proverbial story : He who tries to prove too much proves nothing.

But even his exaggerations and his mistaken estimates show the length to which Bonaparte carried his desire to conciliate the Mussulmans and, consequently, the extent to which he regarded political action as necessary in order to consolidate the result of military success. He gave a last example of this immediately after his victory at Aboukir. As on each occasion on which the clash of arms had been stilled, policy came into play, and especially his Mussulman policy.

Two days after Bonaparte's return to Cairo there came the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet. Bonaparte was concerned for the celebration of the customary festival with special splendour ; he wished it to provide the French with the opportunity of demonstrating the identity of French feelings with those of the native Mussulmans, and he also wished that the traditional rejoicings should associate the celebration of his victory with the commemoration of the religious anniversary. On August 13th Cairo was beflagged and decorated ; in the evening the streets were illuminated, and in the Esbekieh square salvos of artillery were fired and fireworks were let off. The sheik El Bekri, in his capacity of emir of the sherifs, gave a dinner to Bonaparte

and his lieutenants. Mustapha Pasha, the vanquished commander at Aboukir, and the principal Turkish officers captured with him, were also invited to this dinner. These Ottoman pashas and beys were thus treated altogether differently from the prisoners brought from Syria, and were made witnesses of the way in which the French were treating the Mussulman leaders and the Islamic faith. As guests of the sheik El Bekri, in the midst of those whom the French called 'the great sheiks of Cairo,' Bonaparte listened to the declamation of Arabic poems in honour of Mahomet, to the ritual prayer, and to the reading of the genealogy of the Prophet. At the end of this banquet, the whole of the garrison of Cairo came with torches to visit the host of its general-in-chief.

Such was the importance attached by Bonaparte to the celebration of this Mussulman festival that he described it in broad outline in a general order signed by himself, ordering the commandants of provinces to bring the facts to the knowledge of the whole population by means of a circular in Arabic which was sent to every village. He meant it to be known everywhere with what splendour the festival of Mahomet had been celebrated in Cairo. 'Never in human memory,' he wrote, 'has such brilliance been witnessed. . . Mustapha Pasha and all the Turkish prisoners were amazed at the sight of the respect the French had for Islamism and for the law of the holiest of the prophets.'

This was the best element in Bonaparte's Mussulman policy—his protection of the Islamic cult and customs, his encouragement of their observance as usual, the official French co-operation and participation in the religious festivals, and the wide diffusion of the facts attesting deference to the religion of the majority. Of the steps taken by Bonaparte to win over the Mussulmans, it was these that were most appreciated, that had the best chance of bearing fruit with time, and that were subsequently adopted by others.

As at the outset of his enterprise, Bonaparte had no intention of confining to Egypt the repercussions of his dealings with Islam. During his absence from Cairo the



caravan of the Maugrabin pilgrims returned from Mecca. Dugua welcomed them and protected them as on their outward journey. 'The caravan will cross the Nile again,' he wrote to Bonaparte, 'and will take back to its country the certainty that the French protect the Mussulman religion and the Mussulmans who wish to live at peace with them.' The leader of the caravan was appreciative of the attentions he had received and curious to see this Bonaparte, whom he had missed on the outward journey ; he decided to await the return of the general-in-chief. Bonaparte received him and gave him letters for his sovereign, the 'king of Morocco,' and for the bey of Tripoli ; he informed both that he had given the Barbary pilgrims a good reception, and asked them to give good treatment to Frenchmen resident in or passing through their states. These attempts at correspondence with the sovereigns of Barbary came to nothing, but they remain interesting on account of the unchanging intention from which they proceeded—to dissipate the Islamic prejudices against the establishment of the French in Egypt and to win for a French Egypt the sympathies of Mussulmans abroad.

This plan of action abroad originally included the cultivation of relations with the sherif of Mecca. These were the only foreign relations of the sort which did not meet with entire failure. Bonaparte did not forget the sherif during the final phase of his Egyptian proconsulate. A letter from the sherif had reached Cairo during the Syrian expedition ; Bonaparte replied to it on June 30th, before the Aboukir campaign. His reply made no mention whatever of the assistance given by the Meccans to Desaix's adversaries in Upper Egypt, and avoided all reproaches on that account. It offered the sherif renewed assurances of friendship, asked him to send to Suez ships with cargoes of coffee and Indian goods, promised protection for this commercial traffic, and sent him a letter for transmission to the governor of the Ile de France. The letter requested the governor to pay the sherif the sum of 94,000 francs as remuneration for his assistance in the correspondence of Egypt with India. It would have been an ample reward, if the payment had

been made ! For Bonaparte's only letter to Tippoo Sahib had not reached the Sultan of Mysore : it had ended its career in the hands of the English. Probably the wily sherif had sold it to them. The epistolary relations with him thus represented no positive success in Bonaparte's foreign plans. The exchange of letters with the guardian of the holy cities of Islam and the arrival at Suez of a few vessels from Jeddah were not a result of any importance from the foreign policy which the French proconsul of Egypt had tried to pursue.

Bonaparte had at first included Turkey in the scope of his foreign policy. Subsequently he had excluded her, after she had excluded herself by making war on him. When he had vanquished her, he brought her back into his schemes ; he gave her a place in his last-minute political speculations. He returned to his first idea of peace and agreement with her, counting on his victory to gain him a hearing at Constantinople. On August 17th, 1799, he wrote a letter to the Grand Vizier.

It was a curious and enigmatical letter, which will always remain open to contradictory interpretations. An enemy of Bonaparte's, the Englishman Sidney Smith, saw in it an invitation to negotiate for evacuation ; Bonaparte's successor at Cairo, Kléber, actually started negotiations on this basis. Is not that the natural conclusion, indeed, to draw from such phrases as these ?—' It is said that you want Egypt ; but France has never had any intention to take it from you. Entrust your Minister at Paris with full powers, or send someone to Egypt who has been made acquainted with your intentions and entrusted with full powers. In two hours' discussion it will be possible to settle everything.'

But the idea that Bonaparte would have been ready to give up the possession of Egypt without being absolutely forced to do so, is quite incompatible with the importance he still attached, and continued to attach at all times, to holding on to what he had conquered. It is also belied, as we shall soon see, by the instructions he left for Kléber. Thus the intention underlying his letter to the Grand Vizier was not that which a few isolated phrases in it might suggest in detachment from their context. What Bonaparte wanted

Turkey to do was to part from her allies, England and Russia, and to become reconciled with France. He represented Russia to her as the sworn enemy of the Ottoman empire and of Islam, and France as the traditional ally of the Sultan and the friend of the Mussulmans. Such is the theme which his letter developed from beginning to end. 'The Sublime Porte has declared war on its true friends and allied itself with its true enemies . . . Your enemies are not in Egypt: they are on the Bosphorus, at Corfu, in the Archipelago . . . It is not against Mussulmans that the French armies want to deploy their tactics and their courage; on the contrary, it is in unison with the Mussulmans that they should one day, as in all past times, pursue the common enemy.' This was an exhortation to Turkey to throw over her alliances and to take her place alongside France in a political system which would set the Mussulmans against the common adversaries of the French Republic and of Islam.

If a Franco-Turkish rapprochement was to be possible it was essential that the question of Egypt, the apple of discord between the two countries, should be eliminated; and that was the actual purpose of the invitation to negotiate sent to Constantinople. But the evacuation of Egypt by the French troops was not Bonaparte's idea of the solution through which the Egyptian question could cease to be a cause of conflict between Constantinople and Paris. His solution would have been to retain the French in Egypt as allies once more of the Turks. After his victory, from which he hoped for a salutary effect on the reflections of the vanquished, Bonaparte returned, in fact, to the political conception which had been his own and that of the Directory when the Egyptian expedition was embarked on—the conception of a French occupation of Egypt, without prejudice to relations of friendship, even of alliance, between France and Turkey.

Bonaparte suggested to the Turks that it was in their interest to draw upon French support for the force needed for the rebirth and renewal of the Ottoman state: 'This is the sole means,' he wrote, 'of restoring stability to the

Mussulman empire.' The argument is worth noting, for it is exactly the same as that to which Mehemet Ali turned later, when he wanted to persuade the Sultan to admit his claim to autonomous and hereditary power over Egypt and Syria. Thus, on this point as on a number of others, the policy of the founder of modern Egypt took over and continued that of Bonaparte while he was governor of Egypt.

But the *de facto* usurpation which the Sultan of 1840 only reluctantly permitted to one of his pashas, a Mussulman like himself, the Sultan of 1799 could not tolerate from an Infidel general of French troops; and still less so seeing that the invasion of Egypt had thrown him into the arms of the English and Russians and he was now the prisoner of the alliance with them. The protestations of friendship for Turkey and for Islam, the advice not to trust the Russians, and the demonstration of common interests of France and the Ottoman empire, were bound to fail in face of the position which had been irrevocably taken up.

Thus, at the end as at the beginning of Bonaparte's Egyptian proconsulate, his foreign policy was doomed to failure at Constantinople. It was doomed, indeed, in every field it attempted to enter: as he had failed with the Sultan Selim, so he failed with the pasha of Aleppo, the pasha of Acre, the sherif of Mecca, the bey of Tripoli, the bey of Tunis, the bey of Algiers, the king of Morocco, and even the sultan of Mysore, whom he failed to reach at all. Wherever he turned, he got no further, or very little further, than vain attempts to enter into contact, and obtained only negative or negligible results.

At the moment when Bonaparte was making these overtures to the Grand Vizier, to which Sidney Smith was to reply, he was on the point of leaving Cairo for Alexandria and France. His last stay in Cairo was for one week. Between August 11th and 18th, 1799, amid secret preparations for an unannounced departure, including the drafting of ample instructions for a successor who was ignorant of his coming appointment, and many decisions concerning military administration and the movements of troops,

Bonaparte found time to give the Divan a severe lecturing, to take part in the festival of the Prophet, to spread the news of the festival in the provinces, to speed the Barbary pilgrims on their way, to write to the pasha of Tripoli and the king of Morocco, and to send a letter to the Grand Vizier. During these seven days he also took part in the labours of the Institute.

## XIV

### TRIALS AND ENTHUSIASMS OF SAVANTS

' SINCE THE Syrian expedition had taken from Cairo a large number of the members of the Institute, there were no meetings on 21 and 26 Pluviôse, in Ventôse, Germinal, Floréal, and Prairial, and on 1 and 6 Messidor.' So wrote the *Décade Egyptienne*, which continued to give summary reports of the meetings of the Institute of Egypt. What sufferings, what losses are passed over in silence in this laconic statement of the suspension of activities of the learned body throughout the murderous campaign in Syria !

Many members of the Institute, and still more members of the Science and Arts Commission, accompanied Bonaparte on this expedition. All set out with faith in their star : it was subjected to severer tests than ever.

Bonaparte eased the passage across the desert between Quatieh and Gaza for the two senior members of the phalanx, Monge and Berthollet : they made the journey in his carriage. Costaz also was privileged : he rode a horse furnished by the general-in-chief's stables. The rest went either on camel's back, on horseback, or on foot, according to the rank which they held or to which they were assimilated ; and these marches in the sand, under the implacable sun, without meeting a single cluster of palm trees between El Arish and Khan Yonnès, were the hardest they had ever endured. Even then there were fanatics for science who did not hesitate to add to their fatigue, in order to acquit themselves better of some task ; their interest in it helped to keep them going. Jacotin, colonel though he was, covered the whole distance from Cairo to Acre on foot, ' surveying by counting his paces and with the compass each

day's march and the camps pitched by the army, preparing the map of the invaded country'; Savigny, the only naturalist with the expedition, 'employed his time collecting the insects of the desert,' while officers and men were all tired out and exhausted. Thanks to Savigny, Syria yielded a harvest full of interest; on his return he gratified his colleague Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire with lizards, snakes, and quadrupeds he had caught and brought back.

The first successes, some of them dearly bought, created impressions not all of which were comforting. Jaffa was taken by assault, and the sack of the town brought the savants face to face with scenes of carnage, looting, and lust, of which the horror never paled in recollection. Then, with this spectacle still in front of them, there came the mass execution of the Turkish prisoners—a massacre in cold blood, frightful to see, and disturbing to their conscience. On top of this came plague, spreading rapidly. The military medical officers called it 'bubonic fever,' in order not to alarm the troops too much. But this euphemism imposed only on the ignorant, and even that not for long. Malus, mathematician and physicist, member of the Institute of Egypt and a future member of the Académie des Sciences, remained in the charnel-house of Jaffa, with a garrison of four hundred men; he had been placed in charge of the plague hospital. Naturally he was soon struck down by the 'sickness that spreads terror,' and nearly died of it. He was sent by ship to Damietta; the passage saved his life, and his recovery was not prevented by a month's stay in the quarantine station of that town, which was full of plague victims who, like him, had been evacuated from Syria. But before leaving Jaffa he had passed the contagion to Saint-Simon, member of the Science and Arts Commission and brother of the future founder of Saint-Simonianism. 'Saint-Simon,' wrote Malus laconically, 'came to see me on his arrival from Egypt. He was in perfect health. Two days later he was dead.' The same fate was suffered by Bringuier, of the Polytechnique, who had just received his epaulettes as second lieutenant.

Those who followed Bonaparte to the ramparts of Acre

were able at first to imagine that they had been more fortunate. But the resistance of the fortress soon brought them sad disappointment and painful sufferings. The flotilla carrying the siege guns was captured at sea by the English, and there were regrets that the artillery had not adopted the 'gun-carriages with wheels furnished with very broad felloes,' with which Conté had proposed to provide the cannon of large calibre to enable them to cross the desert. Soon trench service made many gaps in the ranks of the officers of the Engineers and the Artillery. After Charbaud and Fuseau de Saint-Clément, both fresh from the 'X' (the Ecole Polytechnique), Horace Say, chief of staff of the sappers, fell : he was a member of the Institute of Egypt, and was one of the founders of the Polytechnique, where he had taught the science of fortification. A still more serious loss was that of General Caffarelli, the senior officer in charge of the savants and artists. He was wounded in the trenches by a bullet which struck his elbow-joint ; his arm was amputated by Larrey, and the man whom the Egyptians had nicknamed 'Old Wooden-leg' had become one-armed as well. He hoped to survive his wound, and thought out plans for enabling him to keep his seat on horseback with one arm and one leg. But fever took hold of him and carried him off eighteen days after he had been hit. His last moments, according to witnesses, were marked by 'scenes of lofty and profound philosophy.' He discussed political economy, his favourite study, recalling to those present at his death the picture of 'Socrates, anxious before leaving the world to bequeath to it all that he had of useful knowledge.' Bonaparte gave him just praise in a general order to the troops : 'The army has lost one of its bravest leaders, Egypt one of her legislators, France one of her best citizens, and science a man who played a celebrated part in it.' His death was announced to the Cairo Divan by the general-in-chief, and his well-deserved reputation among the natives of Egypt as a scientist and a man of many talents brought him this funeral oration from Abderrahman Gabarti : 'He was the biggest devil of all the devils.' For the Arabs of that period, even the educated



ones, the resources due to scientific ideas unknown to them had infallibly something to do with the diabolical arts, with the infernal powers or the djinns.

The camp of the besiegers was also ravaged by dysentery. Monge recovered from it, thanks to the devoted care with which he was surrounded by Desgenettes, Berthollet, and Costaz. But Venture succumbed to it. The fatigues of the campaign had broken the health of this sexagenarian, the Nestor of the phalanx of savants. He fell sick before Acre, but went with Bonaparte in his march on Nazareth; there he stayed for treatment at the convent of the Pères de Terre Sainte, where the general and his staff had stopped for one night; the malady laid him low in a few days. This was another grave loss, not only for the Institute of Egypt, but for the French administration: Venture had ranked as 'the chief interpreter to the general-in-chief,' and had been described as in effect Bonaparte's 'prime minister' for everything that concerned relations with the Orientals. His death deprived Bonaparte and the army of a civil collaborator who possessed an incomparable experience of the East and a most valuable influence over the natives of whatever race or religion. Venture de Paradis was thus regretted not only as a man admirable in himself and esteemed by all his compatriots, not only as a learned orientalist admired by his rivals, but as a member of the expedition to whose services it owed a great deal and from whom it would still have had a great deal to ask. His death also was announced by Bonaparte to the Cairo Divan, most of whose members had known him before 1798, at the time when he was interpreter to the French Consulate General in Egypt.

The vacancy left by Venture was filled by his pupil Amédée Jaubert, of Aix en Provence, who was to have a brilliant career. Like his master, Jaubert had a taste for works of erudition. The crossing of the desert inspired a paper which he completed thirteen years later and which was included in the *Description de l'Egypte*—'The nomenclature of the Arab tribes camped between Egypt and Palestine from Khan Ionnès and Ghazzah to the Orontes, and in the northern part of the desert which separates Mecca from Syria.'

When the siege of Acre had been raised and the order given for retreat, the whole personnel of the expedition, civil and military alike, were required to go on foot as far as Jaffa, in order to leave the horses for the use of the many sick and wounded. In spite of this, it was impossible to provide mounts for all the casualties, and the spectacle of unfortunate sufferers dragging themselves along after the marching columns, as long as their strength held out, was found heart-rending by the most hardened of the 'Pekinese,' who witnessed pitiable and tragic scenes which they never afterwards forgot. What was worse still, the desperate condition of some plague victims presented a painful problem of conscience on the departure from Acre and also from Jaffa. Bonaparte hinted to Desgenettes that they should be given a strong dose of opium : Desgenettes replied that his profession was to preserve life, not to destroy it. A military pharmacist who was more docile and less scrupulous undertook the tragic duty ; afterwards he declined to return to France. The incident left a mutual bitterness between the general-in-chief and the chief medical officer of the army, which soon broke out into an open quarrel in the midst of a sitting of the Institute of Egypt.

Amid these new trials the morale of the French men of science remained unaffected. One day, walking at the head of the army between Tantourah and Caesarea, Desgenettes discovered a well in the ruins of a castle of the Crusaders. He turned back and went with three bottles of water to meet his friends Monge, Berthollet, and Costaz, who were dragging themselves along some kilometres behind. Monge, in a courteous phrase, expressed his regrets at the ill-favour Bonaparte had shown Desgenettes since the incident of the plague victims. Desgenettes' reply was to chant at the top of his voice : *Beatus vir qui non obiit in consilium impiorum, et in via peccatorum non statit, et in cathedra pestilentiae non sedet.* 'Blessed is the man who has not entered the council of the impious, who does not walk in the path of the sinners, and does not sit in the seat of the pestilence.' To be tramping along the coast of Syria, with memories of the tragedies and the charnel house of Acre, and with ■ frightful

desert to traverse for the second time, and not to forget his Latin ! This was really showing spirit.

But on their re-entry into Cairo in the middle of June, 1799, the detachment of savants and artists who had taken part in the Syrian campaign brought back from it on the whole no very favourable impression : the prestige of their ' fellow-member ' Bonaparte had paled a little, for the time, in their eyes.

Those who had been left in Egypt had not had to endure such sufferings, but they had not remained inactive. Fourier, the permanent secretary of an Institute out of work, was able to devote himself entirely to his functions as French commissioner with the Cairo Divan, a post to which Bonaparte had appointed him before leaving. He had done wonders, and was entitled to his share, alongside Poussielgue and General Dugua, of the merit for the maintenance of public order in the country. On welcoming him, twenty-eight years later, into the Académie Française, Villemain justly paid tribute to his rôle on this historic occasion, not without mixing into the merited praise the little dose of exaggeration permissible in an academic welcome : ' During the Syrian expedition, in the absence of the supreme head, . . . the secretary of an Academy of Sciences became almost the governor of half of Egypt.'

While this mathematician was engaged in administration, Vivant-Denon had been pursuing his artistic discovery of Upper Egypt. He was soon joined there by a group of engineers, whom Dugua had sent from Cairo on 29 Ventôse, year VII (March 19th, 1799), in accordance with an order left by Bonaparte. For Bonaparte had soon wanted to have exact information about this Upper Egypt, where he was never to go himself, but of which he was eager to learn the resources. It is incontestably to him that the honour belongs of having ordered its exploration and description. This work was entrusted to a commission, the first of three which were to operate between Cairo and Assouan during the French expedition. At its head was placed the engineer-in-chief, Girard ; under him were Dubois-Aymé, Duchanoy,

Descotils, de Rozière, Dupuis, Jollois, and Villiers du Terrage, all civil, mining, or mechanical engineers; with them went the engraver and sculptor Casteix. The instructions of this commission were to collect in Upper Egypt all possible information concerning agriculture, commerce, the arts (that is to say, the trades), natural history, and antiquities; it was to devote special study to the control of the Nile after the first cataract, and the system of irrigation suited to that part of the valley. Girard and his assistants left with a convoy of munitions which took them to Assiout; they passed seven months in the ascent of the Nile as far as Philae and the descent to Cairo, following the two banks alternately—the troops were still pursuing the Mamelukes. The commission took contours, made surveys, and examined agricultural production and processes of cultivation, including the irrigation canals and the inundation basins; they watched the artisans at work in workshops and bazaars, and collected information concerning administration and taxation.

But none of these things excited the two youngest of the company, Jollois and Villiers du Terrage: the things that aroused their passionate interest were the ancient monuments, the temples and the hypogea. They had scarcely come in sight of them on their journey before they felt drawn to these vestiges of Egyptian art and the civilization of the Pharaohs by a sort of irresistible call. 'It was a veritable conquest,' one of them writes, 'that we were to undertake in the name of the arts. We were going to give, for the first time, an exact and complete idea of the monuments of which so many travellers in ancient and modern times had only been able to speak in a far from satisfying manner.' And they set themselves to the exploration of tombs, the search for mummies, the drawing of plans of temples and palaces, and the copying of bas-reliefs and hieroglyphs. So conscientious was their reproduction of these hieroglyphic signs, which conveyed no meaning to them, that twenty years later the Egyptologist Georges Legrain found their copies still of use.

Their initiation was effected by the hypogea of Assiout.

The temple of Dendera inspired them with boundless admiration, as they had done Denon, Desaix and Belliard, and the humblest soldiers of the army; the spectacle withstood comparison even with the monuments of Thebes and Philae. So long as they stayed at Kenh, they crossed the river to visit the temple and remained there daily throughout the afternoon, careless of the risk of being surprised and massacred by Arabs. The two friends poured out their enthusiasm to one another. They copied with minute care the famous zodiac,<sup>1</sup> of which Denon had had time only to make a sketch. They measured, described, and portrayed the temple with such exactitude and such good taste that their restoration of the great columned hall became one of the finest things in the *Description de l'Egypte*. From this stage in their journey, which was then far from finished, they were short of pencils. How Villiers du Terrage implored his comrade Ripault, who had remained at Cairo, to send some more! 'All ours are used up, we are in despair. Speak to Conté, who has probably made some. If he has not, borrow from your friends or buy some.' Then came Coptos, Luxor, where they stopped only long enough to be 'in transports of admiration at the sight of the ruins of Karnak'; Esneh, where the porch of the temple, the only part of the building then visible above the soil and the hovels of the village that covered it, left them disturbed, struggling against their 'prejudices in favour of Greek proportions and forms,' until 'the real beauty of the architecture' won their enthusiasm; Edfou, whose temple seemed to them 'one of the finest that Egypt possesses,' the work of an architect who had the 'feeling for regularity and symmetry'; Kom-Ombo, and finally Syene, with Elephan-

<sup>1</sup> The zodiac of Dendera was one of the archaeological discoveries which most interested the savants and artists of the expedition. Most of those who left letters or memoirs make mention of it. Barthélémy and Méry, in their mediocre epic poem *Napoléon en Egypte*, devote a few lines to it, in which they hold up to the admiration of the French this

Bulletin de granit où leurs braves aïeux

Ont mêlé leur histoire à l'histoire des cieux!

—this 'granite bulletin in which their worthy ancestors mingled their story with the story of the heavens!'

tine and Philae, where they made many plans and drawings of the temples, whose irregular lay-out struck them without preventing them from appreciating their grace and lightness. Meanwhile Casteix cut on the gateway of the pylon of the great temple at Philae the glorious inscription commemorating the arrival of French soldiers at the extreme limit of their Egyptian campaign, an inscription which the water stored in the Assouan reservoir is slowly eating away :

L'AN VI DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE, LE 13 MESSIDOR  
UNE ARMÉE FRANÇAISE  
COMMANDÉE PAR BONAPARTE  
EST DESCENDUE A ALEXANDRIE.

L'ARMÉE AYANT MIS, VINGT JOURS APRÈS,  
LES MAMELOUCKS EN FUITE AUX PYRAMIDES,  
DESAIX, COMMANDANT LA PREMIÈRE DIVISION,  
LES A POURSUIVIES AU DELA DES CATARACTES  
OU IL EST ARRIVÉ

LE 13 VENTÔSE DE L'AN VII.  
LES GÉNÉRAUX DE BRIGADE  
DAVOUST, FRIANT ET BELLARD,  
DONZELOT, CHEF DE L'ÉTAT-MAJOR ;  
LA TOURNERIE, COMMANDANT L'ARTILLERIE ;  
EPPLER CHEF DE LA 21<sup>e</sup> BRIGADE,

LE 13 VENTÔSE AN VII DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE  
3 MARS AN DE J.-C. 1799  
GRAVÉ PAR CASTEIX SCULPTEUR.

( ' On 13 Messidor in year VI of the Republic, a French army commanded by Bonaparte landed at Alexandria. The army having, twenty days later, put to flight the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, Desaix, commanding the first division, pursued them beyond the cataracts, where he arrived on 13 Ventôse of the year VII. Brigadier Generals Davoust,

Friant, and Belliard, Donzelot, chief of staff ; La Tournerie, commanding the artillery ; Eppler head of the 21st brigade, 13 Ventôse, year VII of the Republic—March 3rd of the year of our Lord 1799. Graven by Casteix, sculptor.’)

At no period in French military history, though it has led the flag into all parts of the world, has war been accompanied by such an effort of investigation into the monumental past of a conquered country ; at no time has the glory of French arms been so closely associated with that of artistic discovery, or have the emotions of combat been combined to such an extent with those inspired by the beauty and grandeur of historic ruins. Desaix and Belliard were as enamoured of Dendera as Denon, Jollois, or Villiers du Terrage. The soldiers broke ranks to run up to it, and marvelled at it. The army had clapped hands at the sight of the monuments of Karnak ; it celebrated one of the republican festivals in the great hall of the temple of Luxor. Belliard harangued his troops ‘in the midst of the hugest of the palaces of Thebes,’ and the majesty of this environment was not lost on the soldiers. How should not brilliant engineers, full of juvenile ardour, alive to all that these buildings, these bas-reliefs, these statues, these inscriptions before their eyes meant to the study of a civilization, an architecture, and an art until then almost unknown, how should they not have been thrilled with enthusiasm at the idea of being able to make use of their pencils, their compasses, and their T-squares in making descriptions, drawings, and plans of them ?

On the way out Thebes had had to be neglected for lack of time ; only four hours’ stay had been possible at Karnak, enough to give only a foretaste of it. But on the return journey Jollois and Villiers du Terrage stopped more than a month on the site of the capital of the Amenophis and Rameses dynasties. They shared these precious weeks between the two banks of the river, staying first in the neighbouring village of Medinet-Abou and then at Luxor, studying one after another all the ancient monuments between which the Nile flows. The art of these monuments

sometimes disconcerted them ; at times they had difficulty in freeing themselves from the traditions with which they were imbued—thus, at Luxor and at Karnak Jollois noted with regret that the laws of symmetry were not always respected ; he noticed, however, that they were respected in 'the vast palace of Karnak.' But precisely because these two ex-students of the Polytechnique were more of engineers than of artists, and were not so much in search of artistic impressions as impatient to draw up exact plans and make a scrupulous inventory, the conscientious documentation which they amassed had an increased value and, in its novelty, an increased originality. It was from their work and their methodical excursions and studies at the tombs of the kings, at Medinet-Abou, at Gournah, at the Ramesseum, at Luxor, and at Karnak, that there was compiled later the complete description of Thebes published in the *Description de l'Egypte* ; Champollion, in 1829, considered it 'excellent.' A consignment of pencils, got together by Ripault, the librarian of the Institute of Egypt, reached them in the nick of time, at a moment when they were arriving at a site where they badly needed them : 'We had been reduced,' one of them writes, 'to making pencils out of lead bullets, which we melted and ran into reeds' ! It was a pacific use for bullets which they might have had to put to other uses ; for they risked their very lives when, 'with six men from the garrison,' they bivouacked on the left bank of the Nile, 'fifteen leagues from any town occupied by the French,' and when, 'carried away by the passion for discovering new monuments or investigating some distant ruins,' they went across the plains of Thebes, each with one or two soldiers, taking the risk of any awkward encounters. What was more, it was between August 8th and September 12th that they gave themselves up to this exercise ; and the torrid temperature in Upper Egypt during this season of the year was an enemy against which there was no protection. Yet, day after day, they left their bivouac at dawn, and were soon exposed to a sultry heat which they would not have withstood if they had not been supported, as one of them writes, by 'the enthusiasm with which these magnificent ruins filled



us.' What freshness of impressions must have been needed in order to refresh two Occidentals in the sands of Thebes, under the August sun !

Even the most well-founded anxiety concerning the fate of the expedition, and therewith their own fate, did not diminish the ardour with which they worked. One day they were about to make a survey of the great temple of Karnak, when the news was brought to them that the Turks had landed at Aboukir, and that the garrisons of Assouan and Esneh had been recalled. 'We looked at one another, wondering whether it was worth while to continue. Our uncertainty did not last long. In spite of our fatigue we took up our instruments and our pencils.'

All this archæological zeal was not to Girard's taste. This worthy engineer, head of the mission, regarded himself as in charge of an inquiry which was primarily economic, and in which antiquities filled only a secondary place. The time his young subordinates devoted to ancient monuments seemed to him to be stolen from more serious duties. Consequently he put spokes in their wheels from Esneh on, reproaching them with 'meddling with hieroglyphs' and, in so doing, with neglecting their proper work. The two young men, with whom he was out of sympathy, set him down in their turn as a 'Bæotian.' 'I denounce him to you,' Villiers wrote to Ripault, 'as no lover of antiquities : he was four hours at Dendera and slept through three of them.' They could not reproach him to his face with this sacrilegious sleep, but at least they were able to reply : 'Is there a single task you have given us which we have failed to carry out ?' The issue was submitted to Belliard's arbitrament, and the two hieroglyph enthusiasts found in him ■ protector ; he absolved them from blame, and they were able to give themselves up to their favourite occupation. Girard was rendered more indulgent by Belliard's pronouncement, and even allowed others of his subordinates, Rozières, Duchanoy, Descotils, and Dupuis, to assist them in their archæological task at Thebes, where they were also helped by some of their comrades who had since come from Cairo—the draughtsman Dutertre, the agricultural expert

Nectoux, the ordnance survey officer Corabœuf, and the engineer Saint-Genis.

The attention paid to the ruins had, in point of fact, done no harm to the economic activities of the Girard commission. Its head brought back from the inquiry, which he prolonged from March to October, 1799, a remarkable 'Memoir on the agriculture and commerce of Upper Egypt,' the reading of which took up no less than three sittings of the Institute, in Brumaire and Frimaire of the year VII, and which was published in the *Décade Egyptienne*. In it he described the physical constitution of Upper Egypt, the state of agriculture, commerce, and industry, the property system, and the collection of taxes, and he devoted the whole of the final part of it to a history of the traffic with India via the Nile, the desert of Kosseir, and the Red Sea.

Some at least of the elements of this big work helped toward the result at which Caffarelli had been aiming when he instructed Girard to ascend the Nile as far as the first cataract: 'Investigate the means of augmenting the influence of this river on the fertility of Egypt; collect the materials needed for drawing up a comprehensive plan of the system of water supply for this country.' These words defined, at this early date, the aim which European engineers, first French and then English, subsequently set themselves, and to which Egypt owes her present system of irrigation. Bonaparte and his collaborators clearly perceived this aim; they had an intuition of the means of attaining it, and they occupied themselves with preparations for doing so. Men like Girard and Le Père realized and stated that a better utilization of the waters of the Nile would enable the cultivable area of the country to be greatly extended.<sup>1</sup> Finally, Napoleon, returning at Saint Helena to the dreams by which

<sup>1</sup> At Esneh, Girard pointed out to his subordinates the full importance of the operations he instructed them to carry out in order to measure the speed of the Nile at various stages in its flood, and the quantity of water flowing past a determined section. At Cairo, Le Père, the engineer in chief, observing that the Nile had not varied appreciably for more than two thousand years, inferred that 'a good system of irrigation and drainage' would unfailingly 'restore to Egypt her ancient fertility' and permit the extension of the cultivable lands at the expense of the desert.

he had been haunted at Cairo, propounded the principle of the storage of the flood waters in reservoirs : ' A thousand locks would control and distribute the inundation over every part of the territory ; eight or ten milliards of cubic fathoms of water which go to waste every year in the sea would be distributed over all the lowlands of the desert.' Except in regard to the sites, which were very different in Bonaparte's imagination from those actually chosen, this is in essence the conception of barrages and reservoirs ; and it dates from the first contact of the French with Upper Egypt.

A detachment of the army had been sent from Keneh, on the Nile, to occupy Kosseir, on the Red Sea. The march was one from which anyone not compelled to make it might well have recoiled : some 150 kilometres across the most barren and most waterless of deserts, ending at a wretched maritime village, and then back again—and this at the end of May and the beginning of June. Yet there were savants and even an artist who were tempted by this pleasure party. With Generals Belliard and Donzelot there went Denon, Girard, Rozières, and Schouani, followed a little later by Dubois-Aymé ; but the last-named did not go to Kosseir of his own accord : he was sent there in disgrace by Girard as the result of a quarrel between the two. The first four divided up the duties of the outward and return journey and the short stay in the unpleasant objective of their excursion. Denon and Girard would describe the town, fort, and port of Kosseir and its trade ; Schouani would be responsible for the topography of the great waterless valley crossed by the troops ; Rozières would study its mineralogical features. This was done. Subsequently two sittings of the Institute of Egypt were devoted to the reading of a learned paper by Rozières entitled ' Mineralogical description of the valley of Kosseir.' The author studied—for the first time—only the physical constitution of the valley. He corrected geographical errors of d'Anville and Bruce, brought forward facts concerning the history of the trade of the valley and its existing exploitation, and devoted a special section of his paper to the various routes leading to Kosseir, to the passage of caravans between the Nile and the Red Sea, and

to the manners and customs of the Ababbé Arabs, who escort them; he mentioned the existence of monuments, which he recognized as boundary marks, along part of the track which he followed, and he concluded with this discovery: 'It seems to me to be difficult to doubt that what we have rediscovered here is the ancient route from Coptos to the town of Berenice and, consequently, to the port of Myos-Hormos, places formerly of busy activity, which were successively the entrepôt of all the trade carried on by the ancients across the Red Sea.' Thus, Rozières' observations brought support to one of Bonaparte's projects for the future, that of the revival of the flow of trade which had existed in the past, and which still continued on a small scale, between the two parallel highways of the river and the sea.

Meanwhile, Kosseir was a poverty-stricken port and a dismal place in which to stay; Dubois-Aymé, sent there as a punishment by the vindictive Girard, was bored to death in the company of General Donzelot. He was still enduring his lot with patience when his punishment was ended. Before the end of August he had rejoined his friends Jollois and Villiers du Terrage among the ruins of Thebes; he had been brought to Kenh by the merchant Hamelin's boat, in which Nectoux and Dutertre had also taken passage. This merchant felucca was promoted to service as yacht for the engineers on their archæological tour, and took them up and down the Nile between Luxor and Assouan, enabling them to revisit Esneh, Edfou, the quarries of Djebel Silsileh, Kom-Ombo, Syene, and Philæ. At Esneh, on their return, they fell in with two groups of savants and artists—much larger groups than their own.

Meanwhile the Institute of Egypt, re-peopled by the survivors from Syria, had resumed its sittings at Cairo. The first, held on 11 Messidor in the year VII (June 29th, 1799), betrayed the nervous tension left by a campaign in which all had not gone well. Bonaparte requested the Institute to appoint a commission to draw up a report on the plague at Jaffa and Acre, and to demonstrate its identity

with that of Marseilles in 1720. Desgenettes, who had not been included in the commission and whom Berthollet asked to join it, curtly declined. He suspected that Bonaparte's suggestion had been made with some idea of throwing the responsibility for the failure of the siege of Acre on the medical service, on the ground that it did not recognize the nature of the malady as soon as it should have done ; and he had no intention of assisting this manoeuvre. The general-in-chief and the chief medical officer were both still under the influence of the incident between them over the plague victims in Syria. Bonaparte launched against the physician some sarcasms about medical science and medical men ; Desgenettes replied with transparent allusions to ■ certain criminal action to which he had refused to agree, and to the danger of playing fast and loose with moral principles. Bonaparte tried to silence him ; the president tried hard to do the same in a friendly way. But the meeting was in an uproar ; such phrases were being shouted as ' mercenary adulation,' ' oriental despotism,' and ' armed guards up to the very doors of a peaceful literary society,' referring to some of the general-in-chief's Guides who had come with him to the sitting—the last outbursts of a type which passed out of fashion after 18 Brumaire. Desgenettes was calmer, but scarcely more discreet ; he was not in the habit of mincing words, and reproached Bonaparte for ' being something other than a member of the Institute while here,' and for ' wanting to be top dog everywhere.' He refused to retract anything he had said, almost taking pride in having ' said in heat things which will travel far ' from the hall in which they had been spoken. In the regular style of his time, in which the ancients furnished quotations for use on every occasion, he enlivened his peroration with a triumphant reply given by the physician Philippos to Alexander the Great, and ended by ' taking refuge in the gratitude of the army.' It was ■ refuge to which he was entitled, but of which he had no need. Later in the month he requested permission to return to France, offered his resignation, and gave the names of colleagues who could take his place ; but Bonaparte peremptorily refused to replace him, clearly less

out of liking for him than in recognition of his merits, which, in spite of his independence of character and his intemperate language, the general-in-chief fully appreciated.

Needless to say, the prudent *Décade Egyptienne* made no mention of this scandal, though the scene had had too many witnesses not to be widely discussed at the time and handed down to posterity. Fortunately there was no repetition of it. Medicine, indeed, perhaps because of the storm it had raised, disappeared for some months from the agenda of meetings. On the other hand, the most various sciences continued to share places on the agenda with literature, art, and archæology. Astronomy was represented by Nouet, who would report his observations for determining the position of the towns of Egypt, or compare the different methods of measuring and dividing time—the Julian and Gregorian styles, the Republican era, the Copt and Mussulman calendars. In mathematics, algebra was represented by Fourier, who gave the Institute the first information about a new theorem, and geometry by Monge, who defined ‘the properties of a specified curved surface.’ Physics was represented by Costaz, who explained the shifting of mountains of sand; chemistry by Berthollet, who studied ‘the endiometric action of alkaline sulphides and of phosphorus,’ and Regnault, who communicated analyses of fresh water drawn at various points; botany by Raffeneau-Delile, with a dissertation on plants described by Forskal and Linnaeus; zoology by Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, continuing his list of fishes of the Nile; civil engineering by Andréossy, who dealt with the building of canals in irregular country, and by Le Père and Gratien Le Père, who reported on various missions; painting by Redouté, with pictures of the fishes described by his comrade Geoffroy; archæology by Balzac, who described the ruins of the great circus or hippodrome of Alexandria. This same Balzac, it will be remembered, toyed with the Muse; the Institute listened to verses of his, ‘composed in honour of General Caffarelli, who died in Syria,’ a rhymed panegyric, which seems to have been the only one pronounced at Cairo, to the memory of the illustrious head of the Science and Arts Commission.

At the same sitting, Parseval read an 'imitation in verse of an idyll of Gessner.' He was no longer faithful to Tasso, Ariosto, or Camoëns, but remained so to his favourite field, that of translation or pastiche. However, on the day of the next sitting the news arrived of the victory of Aboukir. This time the event was happy and glorious enough to inspire in the poet-Academician an ode of his own, which he declaimed to his fellow-members.

But among the reports of these summer meetings the palm belongs to archæology, thanks to a discovery of altogether incalculable importance. On 1 Thermidor of the year VII there was read to the learned company 'a letter in which citizen Lancret, member of the Institute, reported that in the town of Rosetta citizen Bouchard, officer of Engineers, had discovered inscriptions the examination of which may offer a great deal of interest.' The black stone that bore these inscriptions was divided into three horizontal bands : 'the first from the bottom contains several lines of Greek characters, which were cut in the reign of Ptolemy Philopater; the second inscription is in unknown characters; and the third contains only hieroglyphs.' This black stone, the discovery of which by Captain Bouchard was here announced by Lancret to his colleagues, was that which has taken in history the name of 'Rosetta stone,' and which was to furnish Champollion with the key to the deciphering of the hieroglyphs. It was to constitute the most precious item in the collection formed by the Science and Arts Commission, until the day when the English, as conquerors of the French troops, exacted delivery of it, and sent it to the British Museum. Its interest was recognised as exceptional from the first; the philologists of the Institute of Egypt were alive to the possibilities of making use of an inscription in three languages, one of them known, for wresting their secret from the two others, and notably from the hieroglyphic characters. The orientalist Marcel began the study of the stone, and identified the second inscription, which had first been taken to be Syriac or Coptic, as in the 'cursive characters of the ancient Egyptian language,' in other words, what have since been called Demotic characters. He noticed,

in the lines of Greek characters, words that do not belong to the Hellenic tongue but to the Egyptian. These first facts he gave in a note in the *Décade*. This did not carry the matter very far, but for all that it was the beginning of an effort at interpretation made by many savants after him, culminating in Champollion's reconstitution of the Egyptian alphabet and so in the reading of the hieroglyphs. The short paragraph in the report of the proceedings of the Institute, announcing the discovery of the Rosetta stone, was virtually the birth of Egyptology.

Egyptology is the daughter of the French expedition. Maspero said of it that it had its family documents in Bonaparte's campaign. It was born of the contact established with Egypt's monumental and epigraphic patrimony by the savants and artists attached to the army. Its first office was Quassim Bey's palace, which sheltered the Institute, the Commission, their archives, and their collections; and the promise of its magnificent development was contained in the enigmatic stele found by Bouchard, reported by Lancret, and examined by Marcel.

Bouchard, like Lancret, had passed through the Polytechnique. The script of the ancient Egyptians was a mystery over which these two former students of the 'X' were to rack their brains. But how easily a lapidary inscription, even a unique one, might have passed unperceived by an officer of the Engineers, in a country in which so many stones bore unintelligible signs, if the word had not been passed from top to bottom of the military hierarchy for everything to be collected which could be exploited by science, and if the ambition to assist in scientific research had not stimulated the army's obedience to this order! How much, too, Bouchard's providential discovery owed to the chance circumstance that it became known at once to Lancret and was announced by him to the Institute! In all this the value was shown of the instructions given by Bonaparte that his officers should take note of anything that they thought likely to be of scientific interest; the value was also shown of the incessant tours required of all the specialists.

This order for constant alertness and for the mobility,



not to say the perpetual motion, of the members of the Science and Arts Commission, whether members of the Institute or not, dated from the earliest days of their installation at Cairo. It continued in full force throughout. At the academic session of 11 Messidor in the year VII, Costaz proposed a system of intensification, guidance, and co-ordination of the kind collaboration of Frenchmen in all parts of Egypt in the work of the Institute ; a commission including, with Costaz himself, Berthollet, Monge, Nouet, and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, was charged with the collection of information sent in on geography, antiquities, commerce, and agriculture, and with 'directing research by continuous correspondence.' Meanwhile the comings and goings of the guests of Quassim Bey's continued without intermission. Never were intellectual workers less sedentary. Once for all, Bonaparte had manifested his desire that 'the members of the Institute and of the Commission should go,' as one of them wrote, 'to the different points of Egypt to examine there such things of interest as might be found there.' Thus they were constantly being sent, when the initiative did not come from themselves, sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another. Scarcely was any reconnaissance or small expedition organized without one or another of them being attached to it, either at his own request or under orders. When Tor, on the Red Sea, in the Sinai peninsula, was reconnoitred, the engineer Arnollet went there on board ■ small vessel fitted out for war service. He subsequently took part with the draughtsman Pourtat in an unsuccessful naval attempt to occupy Kosseir<sup>1</sup>; he had a narrow escape, for one of the gunboats of the flotilla blew up, and Pourtat, with fifteen sailors, lost his life. When the *miri* was being collected and requisitions were being made in Middle Egypt, Jomard, Dupuis, and later Rozières went with the collectors. So when Menou received orders, in July 1799, to occupy the Coptic convents by the lakes of Natroun, the engineer Gratien Le Père and the ordnance officer Lévêque joined the party, although these monasteries had already been visited

<sup>1</sup> Before, of course, Belliard and Donzelot occupied Kosseir in an expedition from Kench, on the Nile.

by Andréossy. They visited three of them, and were struck by the extreme dirtiness of the monks' quarters ; they were nearly suffocated by the atmosphere they breathed—it seemed to them ' even more insupportable than the mephitic air of the queen's chamber in the Grand Pyramid.' The excursion had to be cut short, Menou being recalled urgently on account of the Turkish landing at Aboukir. The hurried return was extremely arduous ; Le Père, nevertheless, kept a diary on the way, from which the *Courrier de l'Egypte* published an extract describing the convent of Saint-Macaire.

On his return from Aboukir, Bonaparte found Denon back in Cairo. The painter, emaciated by fatigue, said humorously that all his flesh had been swallowed up by his portfolio. He had a great deal to tell of the wonders he had admired in Upper Egypt ; and the sketches of which his portfolio was full proved that he was in no way exaggerating. The letters from Jollois and Villiers du Terrage to their friends at Quassim Bey's, Ripault among them, told of the splendour of the monuments examined by these two young engineers. Their comrade Descotils, too, had sent to the Institute, with information concerning the agriculture and industries of Upper Egypt, a ' short description of the ruins of Dendera.' The correspondence of the generals, Desaix and Bellaïrd, themselves had contained references to these monuments, which marked stages in their campaign. ' At Thebes,' wrote Desaix, ' there are two obelisks of such dimensions and finish as are unequalled by any of those at Rome. If transported to Paris, they would be very extraordinary.' This was the first appearance of the idea which led, thirty years later, to the gift of the two obelisks of Luxor to France by Mehemet Ali and to the transport of one of them to Paris ; it was also the revival, applied to an obelisk, of an idea which had been submitted to Louis XV in regard to Pompey's column. But in 1799 the French, both within and outside Egypt, had more urgent things to consider than the removal of an obelisk ; moreover, the sea was not free from enemy vessels, and Bonaparte was proposing to entrust it very shortly with something more easily smuggled across than a granite monolith—his own person.

None the less, all that had been told him of the country between Gizeh and Assouan, especially between Assiout and the first cataract, showed him the necessity of having it thoroughly explored and described, giving much more attention to the antiquities, the architectural, sculptural, and epigraphic wealth of the country, than had been required of the Girard mission. Accordingly, on August 13th, 1799, he issued an order for two new commissions to be formed, under the direction of Costaz and Fourier, to visit the monuments of Upper Egypt ; they were to set out on the 15th and the 18th, escorted by detachments furnished by the 21st light brigade. The first commission, under Fourier's direction, was composed of Saint-Genis, Cécile, Lancret, Jomard, Chabrol, Arnollet, and Vincent, engineers ; Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, zoologist ; Raffeneau-Delile, botanist ; Redouté, painter ; Villoteau, musician ; Lacypierre, medical officer ; Rouyer, pharmacist. The second commission, under Costaz's direction, comprised Nouet and Méchain the younger, astronomers ; Corabœuf and Viard, engineers ; Balzac and Lepère, architects ; Coutelle, head of the balloonists ; Savigny, zoologist ; Coquebert, botanist ; Ripault, littérateur ; Lenoir, controller of the Mint ; and Labitte, medical officer. 'The officers commanding the two expeditions,' added Bonaparte's order, 'will correspond with me whenever they visit monuments which furnish them with new observations or descriptions.' His imminent departure from Egypt was to make impossible this correspondence with him on their archæological explorations, but left them free to correspond with his successor.

The Costaz and Fourier commissions did not leave Cairo until August 20th, some forty-eight hours after Bonaparte's own departure. But their appointment and staffing were his own work ; and in all his campaign no more effective measure was adopted for the revelation of ancient Egypt than his decision to make this great inquiry and his organization of it.

## XV

### *ABRUPT END OF THE PROCONSULATE*

WHEN BONAPARTE returned to Cairo after his victory at Aboukir, he had already decided to leave for France within a very short time, concealing his departure from the French army and the native population until he had left Alexandria, taking into his confidence only those collaborators from whom it was absolutely impossible to keep the knowledge of his resolution, and giving even those persons whom he would be taking with him no hint of his purpose until the last moment. From the first, the date for carrying out his secret decision depended only on two conditions—the completion for sea of the frigates which he had ordered Admiral Gantheaume to hold in readiness for his passage ; and a favourable moment for setting sail and putting out to sea, evading the English fleet.

Bonaparte's final act as Governor of Egypt was thus ■ clandestine departure, a sort of moonlight flit, which those of his companions in the expedition who were the most irritated, or the most depressed, at finding or imagining themselves to have been abandoned by him, described even more irreverently—as flight.

Departing surreptitiously for France, transferring the command-in-chief to Kléber without any warning, and leaving his army without having received either an order or any authorization to do so from the Directory—did all this mean that Bonaparte considered the Egyptian enterprise as doomed, and the possession of Egypt lost to France before long ? Did it mean that he meant to escape from having to serve as liquidator of the expedition ? If that is the meaning of his departure, what we have called his final act as Governor

of Egypt would imply the conviction that all the work he had accomplished, military and civil, must end inevitably in an early sacrifice.

Is that the conclusion that must be drawn from his sudden and secret embarkation for France? It is of importance to know, in order to complete his portrait as Governor of Egypt, and to determine whether it was as a disillusioned man, conscious of an irremediable failure, and slipping out of the final responsibilities for an unwelcome task, that he mysteriously withdrew from Cairo on August 17th and from Alexandria on the 23rd, never to return.

Bonaparte had never considered himself bound to remain long in Egypt. Later, when a prisoner in Saint Helena, he went so far as to say: 'I should have done better to remain in Egypt,' meaning thereby that he had had a vision of an eastern career opening out before him. As Emperor he liked, at certain moments in his reign, to assume the complete success of his arms in Syria and to build for himself on that hypothesis a great political and military career in the East. But these retrospective speculations belong to the realm of fancy. In reality, during his campaign in Egypt, apart from the times when he sought distraction in the amusements of the imagination, Bonaparte never had any idea either of pursuing an eastern career or even of taking a long lease of the government of the conquered country. At the outset of the expedition, when he was able to suppose that communication by sea would remain open between Alexandria and Toulon, he hoped to be returning to France within a relatively short time, after having completed the conquest of Egypt. He allowed his brothers to infer this from his letters to them. Then, after the destruction of Brueys' fleet, the declaration of war by the Porte, and the Turkish arming of Syria and Rhodes, he realized that it would not be so easy a matter. But he continued to conceive his rôle as consisting in the conquest of the whole of the country, the assurance as far as possible of its external security, and the organization of its government and administration—in short, the complete inauguration and setting to

work of an enterprise which would be carried on by another than himself. Thus, the idea of departing from Egypt, when he could do so without trouble, was in his mind long before his actual decision to leave. It did not imply in his eyes any contradiction with the mission he had received and fulfilled.

The idea took definite shape during his operations in Syria. While before Acre he received a letter from the Directory, written under the influence of the naval disaster of Aboukir, leaving him the free choice between 'going to Constantinople,' 'penetrating to the Indies,' or bringing his army back to France. He gauged the insanity of the two first alternatives. The third demanded the collaboration of his English and Turkish enemies—a repugnant idea, then and always. The evacuation of Egypt by agreement with the enemy, in other words by capitulation, seemed to him to be a solution to be adopted only in the last extremity, especially if the English were to play a part in it. The Directory was entirely prepared for it in the summer of 1799; but Bonaparte had no knowledge of the fact until after he had landed in France, and therefore could not have been influenced by it. But, without going so far as that, was not another course worth adopting if the circumstances permitted it? That course was to return to Paris when the military situation in Egypt no longer made it out of the question for him to leave the country. Unlike a whole army, a general and his suite could make good their escape from a blockaded country. There are indications that letters from his brothers also reached Bonaparte during the siege of Acre, urging him not to delay his return any longer.

Certain orders given by him to the fleet shortly after his return from Syria give reason for presuming that his mind was already made up to leave Egypt, and that he did not wish to be left without the means of doing so at the opportune moment. But the probability of a Turkish landing made him put off his departure indefinitely. His real decision to leave dates from the moment of his victory at Aboukir. Its motives were the situation in Europe, the defeats France

had suffered, and the loss of Italy, news, all of it, that he had learnt from the gazettes which Sidney Smith had charitably allowed to reach Alexandria ; and also his own victory over the Turks, which enabled him to leave on the strength of a success, and which eliminated for some time all danger of invasion of Egypt either by sea or by land.

Had he been summoned by the Directory ? Not at all. He alleged it in ordering Kléber to take over the command-in-chief, and Dugua subsequently stated in the Cairo divisional orders that the general-in-chief had ' yielded to urgent orders from the government.' But that was a mere pretext, of which Bonaparte himself made use only for the moment. Had he been authorized to leave without his troops ? Not at all. No letter reached him from the Directory that made any mention of his returning alone. But he considered himself already at liberty to decide for himself, in view of the confusion in France, the political anarchy, which he schemed to end by seizing power. Did he think of returning to Egypt with reinforcements ? Not for a moment. He left orders for a statement to be made to that effect, after his embarkation, to the Cairo Divan and to the population. But he did not attempt to make any Frenchman believe it. What he wrote to his successor and to his collaborators was the exact opposite—that the place where he would be of most assistance to them, to the army, and to his conquest, was Paris.

Bonaparte thus left Egypt on his own initiative, and without thought of returning. But his departure did not mean that he was sacrificing the colony he had founded. The command of the army of the Orient, and the governorship of Egypt, were a phase of his career that had ended. But the French rule in Egypt was not in his view a closed or closing page in his history or in that of France. In this respect his feeling was markedly different, though he had no actual knowledge of the fact, from the feeling of Talleyrand, of Reinhard, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, and of the members of the Directory.

Before leaving the Ministry, Talleyrand had sent to the Directory a memorandum which was in reality a sentence

of death on the great Egyptian enterprise, in which he had been one of the prime movers, and a funeral oration in its honour. He had begun by burying it beneath some flowers of rhetoric: 'The sublime ideas' of which it had been the expression could no longer be carried out; 'this splendid project' had 'vanished.' Then, representing Bonaparte and his soldiers as doomed to succumb to the assaults of the Turks, English, Russians, Arabs, and even of 'the peoples of Barbary,' he had proposed to negotiate with the Porte for the repatriation of the French army in Egypt, even if it must be on condition that it should not engage in active service until the war was over. His successor, Reinhard, subsequently secured the adoption of a proposal to have recourse to the Spanish Ambassador at Constantinople as intermediary in these negotiations. Then, on learning that the Turks had been greatly depressed by their defeat at Aboukir, the Directory had decided to do without the Spanish intermediary and to entrust Bonaparte himself with the negotiations for the evacuation of Egypt. Bonaparte was informed of all this by a letter of September 18th, 1799, from Reinhard. At that time he was already at sea, and he only received the letter on October 10th, after his arrival in France.

Bonaparte was far from being pessimistic himself when he embarked for France at the end of August. He knew that his army, unless reinforced, could not hold out against the enemy on two fronts at once, the coastal and Syrian fronts. He had written to the Directory to say so, so long before as on June 28th: 'In the coming season,' he wrote, 'we shall be reduced to 15,000 effectives, less 2000 men in hospital, 500 veterans, and 500 non-combatant workmen, leaving 12,000 men, including cavalry, artillery, sappers, and general staff officers, and we shall not be able to resist a landing combined with an attack from the desert.' That is plain speaking, and franker than the decidedly different statements made later by Bonaparte in order to shield himself. But this does not mean that he considered the situation, the weakness of which he had discerned and pointed out, to be irremediable. The remedy, in his view,



was to send reinforcements, his estimate being 6,000 men ; and he did not regard it as impossible to get this force from Toulon to Alexandria. That was the solution of the problem in his eyes—to open sea communication temporarily between France and Egypt for the transport of reinforcements, in order to bring the army of the Orient back to the effective strength it had had at the starting point of the expedition. He meant to work personally for this solution at Paris. As for the evacuation of Egypt, at the moment when he left his army he envisaged it only under conditions which did not yet exist. He did not reject the idea altogether, but accepted it only if the situation should grow worse, primarily through the failure of reinforcements to reach his successor before the winter of 1800. He hoped that this situation would not develop, that Kléber's resistance in Egypt would tire out Turkey, and that France's military situation in Europe, restored by his own efforts, would enable her to make peace with England without sacrificing the French rule established in the valley of the Nile. Thus, if the evacuation had to be agreed to in the end, it would not have to be carried out until after the conclusion of a general peace. In holding out a hand to the Turks by offering to negotiate, after having administered a sound thrashing to them, his purpose would not be to secure the repatriation of the army at the cost of the sacrifice of Egypt, but to secure the virtual dissolution of the Anglo-Turkish alliance.

Such were the plans with which Bonaparte left Cairo and Alexandria. There is no doubt about them : there is abundant evidence. It appears in his instructions to his successor, Kléber, and we shall note it there. It appears later in his actions as First Consul, and there is no secret about those. But we may quote one piece of evidence, belonging to a period when Bonaparte was no longer general-in-chief of the army of the Orient and was not yet First Consul. On October 10th, 1799, at Aix en Provence, he received a duplicate copy of the letter which Reinhard had written to him on September 18th, giving him plenary powers for the negotiation of the evacuation of Egypt. Did he allow the courier to continue his journey, so that the letter might have

some chance of reaching Kléber? Not a bit of it. He kept the missive and took it back to Paris with him. At Paris he learned that the original of this letter had not yet been sent off. Did he request that it should be dispatched? Not a bit of it. He had it cancelled as no longer required. A few weeks later, the Coup d'Etat of 18 Brumaire made him head of the French government. Did he confirm to Kléber the instructions which the Directory had intended for him, Bonaparte? Not a bit of it. He kept to those which he had left for his successor on handing over the command-in-chief to him.

That is all there is to say on the matter. Anyone who drew from Bonaparte's departure the conclusion that he had resigned himself to the loss of Egypt, was deceiving himself. 'There can be no doubt about it; Bonaparte had given up this country long before his departure; but he wanted an opportunity for flight, and he has fled only in order to avoid the disaster of having to surrender it.' So wrote Kléber to Desaix; but he was mistaken.

If Bonaparte was to make good his departure, it must be concealed from the English; and it followed at once that it must be concealed from everyone else. If the French learned of it, it would come to the knowledge of the natives; if it did that, the Turks and English would hear of it. There was thus no possibility of half-measures; very few exceptions must be made to the rigorous concealment of his purpose. But this was not the only reason for secrecy. Another reason was the calculation, not without psychological subtlety, that the *fait accompli* would arouse less sensation than an announcement of pending departure. There was good reason why Bonaparte should do his utmost to minimize the shock of his departure both to the army and to the native population. His concealment of his decision to leave until he was actually at sea was a precaution which he took as a military commander and as governor of a colony. Its purpose was not only to prevent any indiscretion that might compromise his safe embarkation and passage, but also to obviate the danger of protests in the ranks of the

French and to minimize the risk of agitation among the Egyptians.

The army of Egypt, for all its splendid bravery, its almost superhuman endurance, and its admirable discipline, was never a simple fighting machine, passive and without spontaneous reactions. It had nerve, but it also had nerves. It was not free from the colonial malady of *cafard*—‘the blues.’ Not only the military, but the civilians attached to the army, the ‘Pekinese’ of the Institute and the Commission, were subject to attacks of this particular species of hypochondria. Eighteen months after its start, the expedition had not only its partisans but also many detractors. Finally, during the retreat from Syria there had been signs of unruliness in the body of the troops. Bonaparte called the ring-leaders *motionneurs*—obstreperous persons, obstreperous very nearly to the point of indiscipline,—and ordered severe penalties for any excesses on their part either in conduct or in language. If he had announced his departure in advance, he would thus have allowed his decision to become the subject of discussions which would have been certain to be troublesome, and he would have exposed himself to a mass of petitions for permission to join him. There would have been a danger of destroying the morale and the discipline of his army at the moment when both were most needed in order to enable it to do without him.

His principal lieutenants, his civil collaborators, and his companions at arms in general, did not fail to reproach him with lack of confidence in them in keeping his decision from their knowledge. But this was entirely unreasonable. Who can contend that he could have been justified in taking the natives into his confidence? What ground could he have for placing such trust in their loyalty or their faithfulness as to put them in possession of news of which the diffusion in advance might make him fall into an English trap, and which might also be exploited in the country to the detriment of public order? Thus, Bonaparte was guided by considerations not only of his personal security, but of military and political interests, in keeping secret his departure for

France and, in his concern for secrecy, in leading astray those whose suspicions might be aroused by his preparations for final departure, followed by his actual departure from Cairo and that of the persons whom he took with him. His governorship of Egypt ended in a sort of match against the curiosity and perspicacity of his entourage, French and native.

How did he play this match, and with what success? He played it with the utmost caution. On August 12th, he wrote to General Lanusse that he expected to be going to see him at Menouf in a couple of days' time. The most direct route to Alexandria was down the Nile to Rosetta or Ramanieh. The choice of Menouf as his first stopping place was made to give colour to his announced intention of carrying out an inspection, which would last some time, in the Egyptian Delta. At the same time, however, he informed Admiral Gantheaume, who was to take him to France, of the date at which he would be at Ramanieh, and ready to go on to Alexandria. On the 17th, the eve of his departure from Cairo, he announced it to the members of the Divan by letter, stating that he proposed to make tours of the Delta, in order to gain personal knowledge of any injustice that might be going on, and to make the acquaintance of the men of the country; he asked the members to send him news frequently, though he knew that if they sent it it would not reach him. He did not personally take farewell of them, as on other occasions; he bade farewell, indeed, to no one.

He left Cairo after midnight, and Boulak at 3 a.m. His last moments in his palace on the Ezbekieh square were occupied by a discussion with Monge and Berthollet on 'the high dignity of the sciences,' apparently in the utmost calmness. His most direct collaborators, Dugua and Poussielgue, were treated by him with no more frankness than the sheiks of the Divan. He wrote to Dugua that he was leaving for Menouf, and requested the general to send him two couriers daily. He made the same statement to Poussielgue, requesting him to dispatch to Menouf accounts of the state of the taxes in the provinces of Menoufieh and

Garbieh. If his correspondents had had more *flair*, his real plan might have revealed itself beneath his recommendations, which could scarcely have been intelligible if he was really remaining only a few days' march from Cairo. Farmers of taxes in arrear and recalcitrant taxpayers had better be imprisoned, 'it is the best way to bring these people to their senses'; the members of the Divan should be given a good reception; 'laugh and jest with them,' but 'be guided only by your own judgment in everything'; 'keep on good terms with the sheiks'; 'keep the peace in Cairo'; 'strike hard the moment anything happens'; 'have six heads cut off every day, but keep a smiling face at all times'; do whatever might seem best 'while keeping always as far as possible to well-tried paths'—these bits of advice, taken from the letters of August 17th to Dugua and to Poussielgue, might have led them to expect a longer absence at a greater distance than he had admitted. But he admitted no other; and any other appeared to be belied by general orders issued from Menouf and dated the day before his embarkation, calling for investigation of the condition of a certain dyke and of the means of restoring it; and requesting precise information on the matter. The intentional dissimulation was seconded here by the interest Bonaparte took in the continuation of his task after his departure. His activity as governor did not relax even at the moment when he was giving up his post; and it prevented witnesses from supposing that he was on the point of departure.

His successor was appointed without knowing it. The letter summoning Kléber to meet Bonaparte did not tell him what was the 'matter of the utmost importance' which accounted for the urgent summons; moreover, it proved impossible to wait for Kléber's arrival. The secret was thus finally disclosed to Menou, in letters written on the coast between Alexandria and Aboukir, within sight of the frigates which were awaiting their passengers. The letters were addressed to Dugua, Poussielgue, and the Cairo Divan, to inform them of what had happened; and Menou, who was to transmit them, was ordered not to send them off until forty-eight hours after the frigates had put to sea. No one

in the neighbouring city of Alexandria knew what was happening at only a league's distance. No one had been sent for even to take back the horses that had brought Bonaparte and his suite ; they were abandoned on the shore, fully harnessed, and their arrival outside the city gates was the first intimation of the embarkation of the general-in-chief. Thus did Bonaparte win his match and keep the knowledge of his impending departure from the army he commanded and the people he ruled.

How completely did he win ? Sufficiently to hold French and Egyptians in suspense until the moment when Kléber took over the command and the governorship. Bonaparte had not been able to prevent suspicions of the truth. Two days had still to pass before he left Cairo when the rumour began to spread that he was making preparations for final departure. The rumour reached Quassim Bey's, where it was whispered from one to another. Costaz and Fourier declared their incredulity ; Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, more clear-sighted, believed the news. Parseval-Grandmaison took it at once for authentic : the Academician-poet was included in one of the commissions for the exploration of Upper Egypt, but he was thoroughly cured of any taste for epics in real life, and he gave up the excursion to Thebes in order to beg a passage in the boat which was to take Caesar and his destiny back to Paris. Conté noticed the suspicious urgency with which Bonaparte had asked him for a certain portrait. The preoccupied and embarrassed air of Monge and Berthollet on returning from a state dinner given by Bonaparte struck most of their colleagues. Monge was already acting like a man on the point of leaving : he left his books and manuscripts to the Institute library, and his stock of wines to Conté. The preparations at Headquarters did not all pass unobserved—the packing, for instance, of flags and pashas' horsetails,<sup>1</sup> trophies from Syria and from Aboukir. Things were at this stage when, on 30 Thermidor, at 10 p.m., the general-in-chief's carriage came for Monge and Berthollet, the only two persons who were to accompany

<sup>1</sup> The distinctive mark of the pasha's dignity—three or nine were worn according to rank.

him and the only two who knew where they were going. With their trunks packed, the two savants, excited and embarrassed, found it very difficult, amid the anxious interrogation from their colleagues, to maintain the secrecy that had been imposed on them. Costaz asked Monge point blank whether the Institute would be holding a session on the ruins of Thebes : Monge replied unintelligibly in his confusion. Berthollet and he tried to take refuge in the official fiction of a tour of three or four months in Lower and Middle Egypt ; but their attitude of constraint gave the lie to this far from plausible explanation. Finally, Monge, followed right out into the street by Fourier and Costaz, who demanded from him a reply that could calm the excitement of those present, let slip these words : ' My friends, if we are leaving for France, we knew nothing about it this morning.' It was very nearly a confession ; even then the uncertainty was not entirely removed. The question whether Bonaparte had left for France continued to be discussed among the savants and artists, and bets were made on the subject. On the other hand, there was no hesitation on this point—that whether Bonaparte had left or not, the two commissions which he had appointed to go to Upper Egypt would set out at once. Only one of their members deserted them—Parseval, the repentant lyrist. He had not had a moment's doubt as to the truth. He jumped into a boat which took him from Boulak to Rosetta. From there, plunging after the traces left by the general-in-chief, his fever for return to France giving his horse the wings of Pegasus and the twelve feet of his alexandrine couplets, he reached the place of embarkation just before the frigates weighed anchor, and by the charity of Bonaparte was allowed on board.

What happened at Quassim Bey's shows how far it had been possible to conceal the truth. As was fitting, it was discovered by the savants (that is their function) and it was then spread by them (that too is their function). Both in the army and among the civilians it was widely suspected ; the rumour of it had quickly passed round the Cairo garrison. But it met with incredulity or scepticism from many officers,

especially the generals. So great, in general staff offices and official departments, is the authority of an official version ! Bonaparte's closest collaborators, Dugua and Poussielgue, refused to believe that he was leaving for France when the rumour reached them. Dugua regarded the 'news from the Institute' as a *canard*, a rumour and a silly one. On the other hand, the commandant of the last province to give shelter to Bonaparte, General Lanusse, his host at Menouf, had no doubt on the matter : no denial convinced him. But not everybody was gifted with so good a *flair*. The majority of the military element either knew nothing or had some suspicion but no certainty. Dugua fought hardest against the truth. Only on August 26th did he begin to open his eyes, on learning that Bonaparte had left Ramanieh in the direction of Alexandria. He was not fully undeceived until the 29th, when he felt bitterly mortified and greatly annoyed at having been duped. In consequence he was, perhaps, inclined unconsciously to exaggerate his anxiety for the morale of the army and the tranquillity of the population in face of the delay in the arrival of the new general-in-chief.

As for the natives, they were not entirely in the dark, but did not know what to believe. The rumour spread among the inhabitants of Cairo that Bonaparte 'has set out for the coast,' and that 'nobody knows what has become of him'—this was even before he had left his palace in the Ezbekieh square. But the French officers replied to questions with the announcement of his visit to Menouf, and 'the people were deceived by this statement.' Three days later, the Cairenes learned of his departure from the capital—still 'without knowing what had become of him.' No one had any definite knowledge when the traditional festival of the Nile was celebrated at Cairo at the commencement of the inundation. It was celebrated with the usual splendour, with the participation of the French authorities and troops, with music and salvos of artillery, fireworks and the customary rejoicings, without the Egyptians becoming seriously aroused by the news of so great an event as the embarkation of Sultan Kebir. And this was well ; for the Christians of



the country, the Copts, Greeks, and Syrians, jarred the nerves of the easily offended Mussulmans by an ostentatious gaiety and freedom which the former régime would not have allowed. The Islamic pride of Abderrahman Gabarti was offended and his prudery scandalized. 'That night,' he writes, 'there happened on the Nile and its banks things that have never before happened and never will again. Licence was carried to the utmost limit, and no one was present to repress it.' The members of the Cairo Divan, co-religionists though they were of this austere censor, nevertheless showed cordiality to Dugua and honoured him with their presence at the dinner to which he entertained them. What was of more importance to the public order during two days of popular excitement was the fact that the natives of Cairo were unaware that they had escaped forever from Bonaparte's authority.

Natives and French in the capital were officially freed from their ignorance or uncertainty on August 29th, by Dugua's action : he was informed of Bonaparte's departure by a letter from Kléber, and he announced the news in the Cairo divisional orders and brought it to the knowledge of the Divan. Had it really become urgently necessary to speak out, in order to put an end to feelings of agitation in the army, and to unrest among the native population, which might become dangerous ? So Dugua states. If he was entirely justified, Bonaparte's excessive mystification must have overshot the mark. His arrangements were defective in one respect : there had been too long a delay—from the 23rd to the 31st of August—between his embarkation and the taking over of the command in chief by his successor. But, whether or not Dugua's action had been made necessary by this delay, no untoward event occurred either in the army or among the native population while the command-in-chief and the governorship were practically vacant.

With Kléber there arrived at Cairo on August 31st letters from Bonaparte to Dugua, to Poussielgue, and to the Divan, and his proclamation to the army. The announcement they brought had already been definitely known for two days. The news had produced its effect, and it may be

said to have caused no harm. In the light of what Bonaparte wrote, it was easier to appreciate his motives. He told both his direct collaborators and his soldiers that he had made up his mind to go on account of 'news from Europe' and of 'the existing circumstances in France.' He indicated vaguely to the army and in precise terms to Dugua that his return to Paris might be of service to the troops he had left; the army would soon have news of him; he could say no more; his return to France had been 'the only means of assuring the success of the work here and of the individuals of the army'; they might rest assured that French warships would reach Egypt in the course of the winter. On reflection it was impossible to deny the validity of Bonaparte's motive for departure or the sincerity of the hopes he expressed. The critics were certainly not silenced; but many of the military were satisfied that it might be true that Bonaparte could be of most service in future to the army of the Orient, and to the Egyptian expedition, at Paris.

His epistle to the Divan had been written with a view to being paraphrased as a proclamation to the natives, and, unlike his letters to the French, it contained a goodly dose of the fanciful. He had learned that his fleet was ready and that a formidable army had embarked; he had accordingly determined to place himself at the head of this force; he would return in two or three months, and hoped then to have nothing but praise to give to the people of Egypt and compliments and rewards to bestow on the sheiks. These latter were too discerning to be imposed on by the gross improbabilities with which this document opened. But the thing that mattered in it was the news that Bonaparte was going to try to reopen sea communications between France and Egypt, and that in the meantime he was putting them to the test in the direction Egypt-France. 'Everyone was astonished,' writes Abderrahman Gabarti, "that he took the risk of the sea passage, since the English were cruising winter and summer off the entrance of the port of Alexandria. His cleverness in concealing his departure was especially admired.' There was no disturbance either in Cairo or in the country.

The submission of the natives had withstood the delicate test of the final departure of the conqueror of Egypt. Disagreeable and repellent though it may well have been, the clandestine nature of this departure had, after all, involved no misjudgment of the internal situation. It had assured Bonaparte, on the other hand, a safe passage, its prime purpose ; and it had done no injury to discipline in the army. It must thus be admitted that it had been well calculated.

On leaving Egypt, Bonaparte had left written instructions for Kléber. These consisted of a letter dated 5 Fructidor (August 22nd), and four memoranda, on the following subjects : internal administration, fortifications, the defence of the country, and political affairs. These are of interest in many ways, and particularly in that they show that Bonaparte was not at that time resigned to the abandonment of Egypt, and that they describe the native policy which he had followed during his governorship.

Neither the difficulties and lessons of his campaign, nor the dissappointments his expedition may have brought him, nor the military events of which Europe had been the theatre in his absence, had modified his opinion on the importance of his conquest. 'You are able to appreciate as well as anyone,' he wrote to Kléber, 'the importance to France of the possession of Egypt. The Turkish empire, which threatens to go to ruin on all sides, is crumbling already, and the evacuation of Egypt by France would be a great misfortune, especially as we should see that fine province pass in our own day into other European hands.' This, applied to the fact of possession and the hypothesis of evacuation, is the same line of thought which inspired the expedition and the conquest ; and, in reading these lines written by Bonaparte at the moment when he was leaving Egypt, one can only be surprised at his fidelity to the conception from which there had proceeded not only his own Egyptian enterprise but most of the similar projects of earlier date.

As soon as Bonaparte had decided that it was of

importance to maintain possession of Egypt, evacuation became in his view a course which should only be adopted if there was really no alternative. And he did not leave the decision on this point to Kléber's personal judgment. Kléber was only to conclude peace with Turkey at the price of the evacuation of Egypt under certain definite conditions—if all attempts to send reinforcements to the army of the Orient failed, and if, by the following May, he had received neither help nor any news from France; or if in the course of the year he lost more than 1,500 soldiers from plague, in addition to losses in fighting. Even if these conditions were realized and he regarded evacuation as the reasonable course, Kléber was to do his utmost to postpone it until the conclusion of a general peace. Such were Bonaparte's instructions.

In order to prevent these conditions from arising, Bonaparte counted on the possibility of sending reinforcements to Kléber. 'French warships,' he wrote, 'will indubitably appear this winter at Alexandria, or at Aboukir, or at Bourlos, or at Damietta.' His confidence in the reopening of communications by sea is expressed with yet more precision in these lines: 'The arrival of our Brest fleet at Toulon and of the Spanish fleet at Cartagena leaves no sort of doubt of the possibility of sending to Egypt the rifles, sabres, pistols, and iron hoops you need . . . with ■ quantity of recruits sufficient to repair the losses of the two campaigns.' To the reasons which made him regard this as possible there was one more to add—his own return to France. For he was determined to make every effort at Paris to come to the aid of the army in Egypt, whether he seized power, as he told Menou in confidence that he intended to do, or not. In any case, it was of the sending of reinforcements to Egypt that he was thinking when he assured Kléber that he would regard as ill-employed every day in which he had done nothing for the army of the Orient and 'for the consolidation of the magnificent establishment of which the foundations have just been laid.'

Events dispelled Bonaparte's illusions as to the possibility of sending help to French Egypt; but not before he had

made the attempt. Then, when experience had shown him the difficulty of doing so, he rested his hopes on another means of avoiding the necessity of abandoning Egypt—the conclusion of peace with the English without sacrificing his conquest to them; the signature of the London preliminaries of peace without the capitulation of Alexandria. It was, indeed, one more illusion; but a study of the Anglo-French negotiations of 1801 shows that, after all, this hope was not very far from realization. In any case, the calculation on victory in Europe and on its diplomatic exploitation to dissolve the second coalition, to isolate England, and to save France from the sacrifice of Egypt, appears also in Bonaparte's instructions to Kléber. 'Only the English,' he wrote, were sincerely anxious above all to 'dislodge us from Egypt; but they have lost their opportunity.' His line of reasoning was this: if the second coalition was beaten, England would be able to send her troops against the French army in Egypt; but the Porte would no longer be assisting her. Thus, with Austria, Russia, and Turkey detached from England by the defeat of their armies and the efforts of French diplomacy, England, to secure peace in her turn, would have to resign herself to leaving Egypt to France. Once more, an audacious hope, but one which did not require so much for its fulfilment as is supposed.

This plan could only be carried out if the army in Egypt put up sufficient resistance to give Bonaparte time. Bonaparte indicated the lines of this resistance to Kléber in his memoranda on fortifications and on the defence of the country. In the latter he envisaged the operations either of an English or a Turkish army or of both, combining an invasion by land with a landing on the coast, and he sketched the arrangements which the French command should adopt against these operations. This military part of Bonaparte's instructions to his successor assigns to the French army in Egypt a very different aim from simple evacuation.

The same postulate of endurance, of perseverance in the attempt to establish the French in Egypt, underlies the administrative and political instructions contained in the memorandum on internal administration. We find

described here, in a striking summary, the whole policy which Bonaparte had followed. 'The Arab is the enemy of the Turks and the Mamelukes'—a principle to which this reservation should have been made, that the Arab of Egypt was still more the enemy of non-Mussulman conquerors; but it was none the less on this principle that Bonaparte, counting on time to overcome the natives' prejudices against the French, based his political system, since he had not disarmed the hostility either of the Turks or of the Mamelukes. 'The ulema and the great sheiks are the leaders of the Arab nation; they have the confidence and the affection of all the inhabitants of Egypt.' Here we find stated the main reason why Bonaparte made these dignitaries the native collaborators in his rule. The distrust which the Turks and the Mamelukes had shown in them was one more reason for his choice of them as intermediaries between the people and the French authorities. And the French could not dispense with intermediaries. 'It is impossible for us to expect to exert direct influence over peoples to whom we are such strangers. In order to rule them we have need of intermediaries. We must give them leaders, or they will choose their own.' That is the fact learned by experience, the fact which has since inspired all modern colonization, whether of the protectorate type or even under the system of direct administration.

Since the occupying power could not dispense with the aid of native leaders, which ones should it choose? 'I have preferred,' wrote Bonaparte, 'the ulema and the doctors of the law: first, because they are the natural leaders; secondly, because they are the interpreters of the Koran, and the greatest obstacles we have met with and shall still meet with proceed from religious ideas; and thirdly because these ulema have gentle manners, love justice, and are rich and animated by good moral principles. They are incontestably the most upright men in the country.' This portrait reveals the liking Bonaparte had acquired for the ulema; he added one more trait, which completes his picture of these personages and his enumeration of the reasons for his preference for them: 'They do not know

how to ride on horseback, they are not addicted to any sort of military manoeuvring, and they are ill adapted to the leadership of an armed movement.' Bonaparte laid especial stress on these characteristics of the great sheiks, which recommended them to him, in his capacity of governor of Egypt, as his natural intermediaries with the people. Some of these traits are indicated in yet plainer language in a letter from Bonaparte to Kléber which bears the same date as his memorandum on internal administration. 'In winning over the opinion of the great sheiks of Cairo,' he wrote, 'we win over that of all Egypt; and of all the leaders whom the people might have, none are less dangerous to us than sheiks who are timid, who do not know how to fight, and who, like all priests, inspire fanaticism without being fanatics.' Kléber was thus given a full explanation of the reasons for the rôle Bonaparte had assigned the sheiks. Bonaparte asked him also to bear in mind the way he had made use of them and the way he had treated them. 'I gave them an interest in my administration. I made them my mouthpiece in addressing the people, and I placed them on the judiciary divans; they were the channel through which I ruled the country. I increased their fortune; on every occasion I gave them every mark of respect. I had the highest military honours accorded to them.' From which Bonaparte made this decidedly optimistic deduction: 'In flattering their vanity I flattered that of the whole people.' The methods were judicious, but the results achieved were less real than he imagined—two facts often to be observed in following Bonaparte's policy in Egypt from day to day; and they are equally noticeable in reading his own account of his policy.

On the other hand, Bonaparte made no claim to have delighted the Egyptians when he gave them a Grand Cadi of their own race and country. He agreed that he had not done well in making the ulema elect an Arab successor to the Turkish cadi appointed by the Porte. Nevertheless, he regarded his innovation as an important one that should on no account be departed from: 'It is important to hold to what I have done.'

Without entering into the details of his religious policy, Bonaparte insisted strongly on its necessity, and pointed out its close connexion with his administrative activity : ' The utmost care must be taken to persuade the Mussulmans of our love for the Koran and our veneration of the Prophet. A single ill-judged word or action may destroy the work of several years. I have never permitted the administration to deal directly with the personnel or the temporal power of the mosques ; I have always dealt with the ulema and left it to them to act. In every dispute, French authority should take the side of the mosques and the pious foundations.' Bonaparte was right in pointing to his advances to the Mussulman religion as the most powerful of the means of government which he had put into operation ; but he was once more under an illusion when he claimed that this had contributed to making his government ' popular.' For the margin was still wide between the feeling of the people towards him and the ' popularity ' on which he prided himself. There was the same exaggeration when he gave it to be understood that there had been less resentment at his levying of a contribution from Cairo than satisfaction at his leaving it to the sheiks to determine the individual assessments, and at its collection without the violence customary in the time of the Mamelukes. He rightly stressed the usefulness of maintaining friendly relations between Cairo and Mecca, and was justified in recalling his efforts to do so ; but he forced the note when he claimed to have ' won the friendship of the sherif.' Thus a certain complacency over the results of his policy accompanied his bequest of it to his successor : it was the effect of his confidence in it, not of deliberate indulgence towards his own work.

One of the principles Bonaparte laid down was that when necessary the native Christians must be put in their place, and their excesses toward the Mussulmans restrained. There must be no toleration of claims from them for ' emancipation ' to the detriment of their customary relations with the Islamic population. He gave Kléber this advice in a letter written more freely than his memorandum of instructions. His justification of the advice is not without cynicism :



‘Whatever you do, the Christians will remain our friends. They must be prevented from getting too insolent, lest the Turks’—that is to say, the Mussulmans—‘become as fanatically opposed to us as to the Christians, which would make them irreconcilable.’ And after this explanation of the vigilance necessary to prevent the Christians from getting out of hand, there came this phrase, expressing the audacious hope of some day extinguishing religious passion and the hatred of the Infidel in the soul of the Mussulman : ‘Fanaticism must be put to sleep until it is possible to root it out.’ That uprooting was to require more than ■ year, or many years !

One Christian population had a special function, which must be left to it : ‘The Copts are in possession of the financial administration and the collection of taxes ; they must be kept so.’ There must be no Mussulman invasion of that reserved domain, in which, at some undefined future date, the Copts would be replaced by the French.

There must be no systematic showing of favour or disfavour to any element of the population. There must be some counterpoise to the influence of those sheiks who were more or less deliberately favoured ; and where did Bonaparte think of finding it ? Among the Mamelukes, whom he had so often held up to the execration of their former subjects ! They had been destroyed as a political power, but he considered that they ‘may be useful as a subordinate militia ; they are the born enemies of the Arabs and the sheiks ; they can be of service in a good many ways.’ Murad and Ibrahim promoted to princely rank, the other beys appointed generals, and the horsemen under their orders co-operating with the dromedary regiments—such was his programme for the early future. Kléber carried out a little of it by treating with Murad and making him prince of Upper Egypt under the French protectorate.

How many other ideas Bonaparte had to offer for the near or distant future ! Some of them were practical, others less so ; some were concerned with political or economic matters, some with military. In face of the intellectual and moral gulf which separated the conquering

race from the conquered population, the problem of gradual approach inspired in Bonaparte this strange suggestion : to embark for France five to six hundred Mamelukes, together with some Arabs and some *sheiks el beled*. 'These individuals, on reaching France, would be kept there for ■ year or two ; they would see the grandeur of the nation, would adopt our customs and our language, and, on return to Egypt, would form so many partisans for us.' Something of this idea was carried out under Mehemet Ali, with the 'Egyptian mission to France,' the head of which at Paris was a former collaborator of Bonaparte's—Jomard. But the arrangement was wisely confined to the field of education. Since then, in how many colonized countries has Bonaparte's suggestion for visits of natives to the metropolis been put into practice, with varying success ! Other ideas were reserved to the future to realize. The black army : 'Each year some thousands of blacks should be procured from Sennaar and Darfur, and incorporated in the French regiments, twenty in each company.' This is the recruitment of black soldiers for utilization by mixing them among French troopers. Native recruiting : 'The country must be insensibly accustomed to a system of conscription for recruiting the land army and the sea army.' This is what Mehemet Ali did, with the slight difference that the adverb 'insensibly' does not quite fit his military measures. The adaptation of the military uniform of the French to the climate of the East : 'We should conform to the manners of the Orientals, suppress the hat and narrow trousers, and give to the clothing of our troops something of the character of that of the Maugrabins and the Arnauts' (Albanians). 'Thus clothed, they would appear to the inhabitants to be a national army.' This is the formula for the uniform of the zouaves, turcos, spahis, and chasseurs of the French army in Africa. Alexandria as capital of French Egypt : 'It must not be forgotten that Alexandria must one day be the capital of the country.' This is an idea to which we have already referred. It may seem a strange one ; but it seems less so when it is recalled that under Mehemet Ali Alexandria was actually the habitual residence of the

viceroys and seat of the government. Concentration of Red Sea commerce at Suez: 'Suez should be favoured at the expense of Kosseir.'

Such, in broad lines, was the political and military testament of Bonaparte as governor of Egypt. Its significance has sometimes been falsified by a sort of posthumous polemic between Bonaparte and Kléber. Certain admirers of the latter, who is certainly entitled to admiration, have claimed, in order to justify his advocacy of the evacuation of Egypt, that Bonaparte's own instructions showed him to be convinced of the necessity of that sacrifice. What they seem to prove is the exact opposite—that the desire of the conqueror of Egypt was that the expedition should continue. Whether he was right or wrong in thinking that the expedition could continue and yet escape the end to which it actually came, is an entirely different question, which will not be discussed here. But the hope of saving his Egyptian enterprise certainly remained with him to the last during his governorship. This is evidenced by his daily acts in administration and policy and their incidence on the people under his administration.

We have the picture of a general still very young, no beginner in the command of armies, but still a beginner in the government of men. He began with the government of an exotic population, profoundly differing from its conquerors in race, religion, and social conditions—in other words, he began by doing the work of a colonial governor. His task was rendered more difficult for him by very unfavourable external circumstances, by their repercussion within the country, by the interruption of his communications with France, by the absence of financial resources other than those which he could draw from the conquered country; and by the exigencies of military defence against several enemies. In spite of these exceptional difficulties, or rather because of them, his activity in the civil domain was prodigious; the principles directing it were chosen with discernment; the application which he made of his methods was generally judicious; the measures that brought him into

conflict with the interests of the natives were usually dictated to him by the necessities of situations insurmountable in any other way. As to the material and moral results of his civil action, they are certainly inferior to those which he claimed in writing or in conversation. But they must be judged in relation to the time Bonaparte had available. This was thirteen months and twenty days. It was manifestly impossible for his policy and his administration to attain their ends within this length of time ; and it does not follow from the fact that these ends were not attained that they were ill-calculated for gradual attainment over a longer period. In point of fact, the effect they actually produced within the short space of thirteen months was far from negligible ; moreover, their value may be measured by the examples they bequeathed to the future. They were examples for Egypt herself, where Bonaparte sowed seed that bore fruit later ; and for the Western colonizing powers, who in their political and administrative action in Mussulman Africa drew a mass of useful instruction from that of Bonaparte in Egypt.

One might almost establish a parallel between Bonaparte's policy in Egypt and that of Marshal Lyautey in Morocco. There would certainly be some great differences, generally due to the different conditions amid which the two administrators had to work. But there would also be found to be some curious analogies, of which the pacificator of Morocco was not ignorant. The behaviour of the conqueror of the Pyramids toward the natives of Egypt, and the way the latter reacted to his proceedings and to the establishment of the French among them, were matters that interested the creator of modern Morocco. And this is a fact which has made us hope that this subject may find grace in the eyes of the public.



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